

FAME

AND

FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

THE OLD BROKER'S HEIR;
OR, THE BOY WHO WON IN WALL STREET. *BY A SELF-MADE MAN.*

AND OTHER STORIES



Hardly had Bob wrenched the cover off the box when a sound like the ticking of a clock reached the ears of the four. "Creation!" cried Bob. "This may be an infernal machine." Edna screamed. The others started back aghast.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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The Old Broker's Heir

OR, THE BOY WHO WON IN WALL STREET

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Bob and Dick.

"Lord Dick, I don't think I ever saw the board room in such an uproar as it is at this moment, and has been since it opened for business", said Bob Brown, messenger for old John Hopkins, stockbroker, of No. — Wall Street.

"That's right, Bob. It's like Bedlam broken loose. The traders have all gone dippy over the boom in O. & M. Have you sold your little block of twenty shares yet? If you haven't, I advise you to get from under as quick as you can, for there's no telling what may happen inside of the next hour," replied Dick Smart, messenger for Forrest, Robinson & Co.

"No, I haven't sold yet, but I'm going to drop into the little bank on my way back to the office and order it sold right away. At present quotations I stand to win \$28 a share, and that was more than I expected to make out of the deal. Have you got rid of your ten shares?"

"Two hours ago. I'm not taking any more chances than I can help. I cleared something over \$20 a share, and I'm satisfied with that. I don't believe in being hoggish, and hanging out for the last dollar, for those who do, generally get it in the neck."

"They do for a fact. I'm on pins and needles myself for fear a slump might set in before I get to the little bank."

"Oh, I guess nothing will happen between this and the time you put your order in, if you do it on your way back."

"I hope not, but you never can tell, you know. Some broker might throw a big block of O. & M. on the market at any moment."

"Or a combined bear raid might be started against the stock," suggested Dick.

Bob nodded.

"And if it wasn't well supported by the bulls, prices would be slaughtered right away."

"That would start a panic as sure as you live."

"If a panic starts in the Exchange under the present conditions, it will be a corker."

"Bet your life it will. I'm half afraid that is just what is likely to happen, for O. & M. looks topheavy to me, and the crazy traders are making it more lopsided every moment. I feel sorry for the lambs if a crash comes. They'll be soaked good and hard. It's always been a wonder to me

why so many outsiders buy when prices are up. It's the wise guys like you and me, for instance, who buys when things are low and sells when they are up."

"Seeing that this is my third deal and your second, you can't tell what either of us may do in the fool line before we're a few weeks older," laughed Bob.

"That's true enough. Here comes your boss after that note you've brought him. Gee! He looks excited, doesn't he? Just like a man who is piling up a million or two in profits. For an old man, your boss is a hummer when he gets going."

"I wouldn't be surprised but he's long on O. & M., and is looking to make a good haul. I don't know anybody I'd sooner see make a raft of money than Mr. Hopkins, for he's a fine old gentleman. I've heard he was worth more than a million once, but I understand he lost most of it speculating and getting caught on the wrong side of the market."

Here Broker Hopkins stepped up to the rail and took the note from his young messenger.

He tore the note open, read the brief communication, crumpled the paper up in his hand, and dismissed Bob with a nod.

"So long, Dick," said Bob to his friend. "It's me for the little bank now, and I can't get there any too quick, you can gamble on it."

With those words, the hero of this story glided out at the messengers' entrance and hurried up Broad Street.

He crossed Wall and rushed up Nassau a little way till he reached the entrance of the little banking and brokerage establishment that made a specialty of putting through deals for small speculators whose resources would not permit them to patronize the offices of the regular traders, who, as a rule, wouldn't accept any order for the purchase or sale on margin of less than 100 shares of any stock.

The little bank was crowded with customers, most of them seated on long benches watching a small boy who was chalking up quotations on a long blackboard at the end of the reception room.

There was also a string of men and boys trailing away from the margin clerk's window, most of whom were there to close out their accounts at the profit they saw in sight.

Bob joined this line and gradually made his way up to the window.

"I want to sell my twenty shares of O. & M.," said Bob, showing his receipt.

"All right," replied the clerk.

He made out the regulation order and shoved it over to the boy to sign.

Bob affixed his signature and pushed the paper back.

"You can't get that order to the Exchange any too quick to suit me," said Bob.

"Your stock will be sold inside of ten minutes," replied the clerk, shortly.

Bob made way for the impatient customer behind him and left the little bank.

"Seems to me it's taken you a long time to go to the Exchange and back," remarked Cashier True, when he reported at the office a few minutes later.

"Had to wait some time for Mr. Hopkins to come over and get the note," replied Bob, evasively.

"And how much time did you waste talking to some friends of yours on the way back?" snorted the cashier, who was not particularly friendly with Bob.

"No time at all. All the talking I did was in the Exchange while waiting for Mr. Hopkins to show up."

"Well, take this note down to Greene, in the Mills Building, and see that you get back in time to carry the day's receipts to the bank."

"Yes, sir," and Bob was off again.

He got a hustle on this time to show the cashier that he could do his errands up brown when nothing interfered to stop him. He got back to the office at a quarter of three and reported. The cashier had the book, money and checks ready for him in the little bag he always carried to the bank. Bob stepped inside the brass partition, took the bag, slung the leather strap around the shoulder and started off once more, this time bound for the Manhattan National Bank, where Mr. Hopkins was a depositor. By this time he felt sure that his stock had been sold. There had been no slump as yet of the market, and the uproar at the Exchange still went on, louder and more exciting than ever as the day's session was rapidly drawing to its close. When Bob reached the bank he found his friend, Dick Smart, ahead of him in the line that reached half way from the receiving teller's window to the door. Bob got in after the last man and, reaching forward, tapped Dick on the shoulder.

"Hello, Bob," said Dick, recognizing him. "Fix up that matter all right?"

The "matter" he referred to was the sale of Bob's twenty shares of O. & M.

"Yes. I'm out from under now, I guess."

"You ought to be, if you attended to the thing after leaving the Exchange."

"I did."

"Then you haven't any cause to worry."

"Oh, I'm not worrying now. Move ahead and don't hold the line back, please."

Dick moved up and the line followed him. In a few minutes he reached the receiving teller's window, transacted his business and stepped aside to wait for Bob. Five minutes later they left the bank together. Wall Street was full of customers who had left the different broker's offices as soon as the Exchange closed for the day. Every-

body was talking about the phenomenal boom of O. & M., and figuring how much higher it was likely to go. Nobody doubted now that a powerful syndicate was at the back of it and that the combine could hold the price up as long as the members of it were interested in doing so. All the attacks of the bears who were "short" on the stock had failed to unsettle the goom, and bulls were jubilant and hopeful of continued success next day.

"Everybody almost is a bull just now," remarked Dick.

"But if a slump sets in where will they all be?" laughed Bob.

"On the run toward the soup tureen," chuckled Dick.

"I'm mighty glad I'm out of the fight," said Bob.

"So am I. How much do you think you'll be worth when you get your check from the bank?"

"About \$750."

"And I'll be worth \$325. That's about three times as much money as I ever owned before in my life. If my old man knew I was worth that much, he wouldn't rest till he got it all away from me, for he doesn't believe in boys having control of a large sum of money. All the same, some boys can use money to better advantage than men."

"Meaning yourself for one, perhaps?"

"Well, if I had the same chances my father has had for making money, and I didn't do any better than he has done, I'd kick myself around the block."

"Then you don't mean to tell him about your haul in O. & M.?"

"I should say not, and you wouldn't, either, if you were in my shoes."

"You are fortunate in having a father and mother. I'm an orphan, as you know. The only home I have is my room at the boarding-house kept by Mrs. O'Gallagher."

"You have one advantage—you're your own boss."

"That isn't always an advantage. I'd sooner have a real home like you have than have to depend on the cold hospitality of a boarding-room. Suppose I was taken sick, or I'd be carted to a hospital. No, siree; being your own boss, as you call it, isn't such a snap as you seem to think it is."

The boys, having reached the entrance of the building where Bob worked, they parted, and our hero took the elevator up to the third floor to turn the bankbook over to the cashier.

CHAPTER II.—Friday the Thirteenth.

Next morning the tide of speculators set in toward Wall Street again. The financial page in the different daily papers spoke so favorably of the continuation of the rising market that many new lambs ventured downtown with money withdrawn from their savings bank accounts eager to get into the swim. Bob got down early and put in his time before the rest of the force came in reading the Wall Street papers left at the office, and in going over the previous day's market report. He made it a point to keep abreast of the times in Wall Street, for he believed that was the

right thing for him to do. Edna Prescott, Mr. Hopkins' stenographer, came in earlier than usual, for she had a lot of work ahead of her, and she wanted to clean up some of it before her employer came down. The rest of the employees were not so eager to get to their desks and did not turn up a second before the time limit. The girl gave Bob a smile and a "good morning" as she passed into the counting-room, and five minutes afterward the young messenger went in, too, and stopped at her desk.

"You're got your hands full, I see, so I won't bother you," he said.

"Oh, you aren't bothering me. I can work and hear you talk at the same time," she replied, for he liked to have the boy around.

He had made himself pretty solid with her by doing many favors for her. Then Bob was a polite, gentlemanly boy, who never got "fresh" with her like two or three of the clerks tried to do, particularly Mason Hopwood, the cashier's nephew and general assistant.

"I'm thinking this is going to be another strenuous day on the Exchange," said Bob. "Ever since Monday, when the market began booming like a house afire, the boardroom had been in a fever of excitement. Yesterday afternoon, had you been in the gallery, you'd have thought a combination football match was under way on the floor. In fact, it was like a riot on a small scale. It's a wonder to me that some of the traders don't go under with heart failure in the rush. I guess there can't be many weak hearts among the brokers. The O. & M. boom is the biggest thing that has hit the street this year. Lots of people are making money out of it; but there is sure to be a reaction pretty soon, and then a whole lot of the speculators, as well as regular traders, are going to get hit hard. I hope nothing happens to disturb things to-day, but this is hoodoo day in Wall Street."

"Why, how is that?" asked the stenographer, stopping at her work and looking at the boy.

"Haven't you noticed that it is Friday?"

"Of course, I know that; but Friday isn't a particularly unlucky day in Wall Street."

"This Friday happens to be the thirteenth of the month. There have been several panics on Friday the 13th in the past, and I am afraid that O. & M. is ripe for trouble."

"What makes you think it is?"

"Because it's selling way above its normal value. The moment the syndicate that is behind it withdraws support, something is going to happen; and it will happen so quick that it will take away a good many people's breaths."

Edna said nothing, but resumed her work.

"I'll bet the more superstitious among the traders will start in to unload this morning. This of itself is likely to unsettle prices—that is, if the sellers are more numerous than the buyers. You may also take my word for it that if the market shows signs of weakening, the bears are going to jump in and do their best to demoralize things generally. A slump is the only thing that will save many of them from ruin, or the next thing to it."

The appearance of two of the clerks caused Bob to cut out further talk with the pretty operator. He went into the lavatory, made a bluff of washing his hands, and then went back to his post. At half-past nine Broker Hopkins came in

and was presently busy over his mail. Ten minutes later Bob was sent on his first errand of the day. By that time the brokers' offices were filling up with customers, and not a few, as Bob had conjectured, were giving in their selling orders because they feared that something might happen on that fateful day. When Bob returned to the office Mr. Hopkins had gone to the Exchange. Fifteen minutes later he was sent with a note to him. He was not surprised to find the boardroom in a turmoil as strenuous as that of the preceding afternoon. The bears had unexpectedly developed fresh strength and were making a desperate fight for the ascendancy.

The bulls were fighting them off; but their position was not so strong as on the preceding day. Bob was back and forth between the office and the Exchange when not out on other errands. He scarcely had a moment's rest from the time he started out on his first errand. He met Dick Smart twice on the street, but neither had time to more than greet each other and pass on. At two o'clock on his way back to the office Bob felt so hungry that he dropped into a quick-lunch house and called for a sandwich and a cup of coffee. He swallowed both at railroad speed. Just as he slipped down off his stool and put his hand in his pocket for the dime to settle at the cashier's window, a couple of boys dashed into the place and called for coffee and crullers. They looked excited.

"Hello, Mike, how's your health?" asked a friend of one of them at the counter.

"Me health's fine," was the reply. "Hear de news?"

"What news?"

"T'ings have gone to smash in de Exchange."

"You don't mean it."

"We jest come from dere. Some broker t'rew t'ree big blocks of O. & M. on de market one after de udder and busted t'ings up."

"Dat's right," corroborated the other boy, "dere's a big panie on."

Bob didn't wait to hear any more. He threw his check and the dime in at the cashier's window and ran out into the street. From the looks of things in the neighborhood of the Exchange it was evident that something unusual was going on inside. Bob dashed in at the messenger's entrance to make sure that there was some truth in what he had heard. The sight he saw on the floor fairly beggared description. The uproar of the preceding afternoon was almost like child's play compared to the tumult now in progress. A glance at the blackboard showed Bob that prices were falling with startling rapidity. The excitement was tremendous. The brokers were fighting like madmen around the O. & M. standard, which was the center of activity. Almost everybody was trying to sell, while a few big bull operators were trying to stem the panic by buying in the shares. They were lost in the seething maelstrom that eddied around that particular part of the floor. So many of the traders had lost their heads that the panic could not be held up by the cooler brokers. Princes were being slaughtered by those who were long on different stocks. Orders were coming in from all the offices to their representatives to sell out clients at any figure that could be realized. It was a case of everybody for himself now, and each moment matters grew worse. In the midst of the hubbub Bob saw old Mr. Hopkins

acting like a crazy man. His hat was smashed in, his collar was broken and his necktie was hanging out of shape. In that respect he was not much different in personal appearance to scores of other traders. It made Bob indignant to see the way he was buffeted and shoved aside by the young element. Suddenly he was swallowed up in a mad rush and he went down on the floor in a heap. Bob, fearing he would be badly hurt, rushed out from behind the railing and, pushing the brokers aside till he reached his dazed employer, seized him in his arms, and with the assistance of another trader, got him away from the mob.

The old broker looked so bad that a physician was telephoned for. Before he reached the Exchange Mr. Hopkins recovered a bit and insisted on being taken to his office. Bob got a cab and the broker was taken out of the Exchange. The doctor was sent to his office and found Mr. Hopkins lying on his lounge attended by Bob. He examined the old broker carefully, wrote out a prescription, and ordered him to go home as soon as he had taken the first dose. Bob ran to a nearby drug store, got the prescription filled and brought it back with him.

"I'll go out and get another cab for you," said Bob, as soon as the broker had taken the medicine.

"No," replied Mr. Hopkins. "I don't feel as if I could stand the ride uptown yet. I'm pretty bad. I'll rest a while and maybe I'll recover a bit. If I don't, it doesn't matter much—it doesn't matter much," he added, shaking his head in a sad and hopeless kind of way.

"You mustn't talk that way, Mr. Hopkins," replied Bob. "You'll come around all right in a little while."

The broker shook his head again, lay back on the lounge and closed his eyes. Bob didn't feel as if he ought to leave the room with his employer in that condition, so he went over to the private ticker that stood beside the desk and looked at the quotations that came out on it. O. & M. had long since gone to smash. It was now down thirty points from the inflated figures at which it had opened that morning, and most of the other stocks had suffered proportionately. While he was thinking about the hundreds of speculators who must have been ruined, or had suffered severely, through the slump, the cashier opened the door and called him to take the day's deposits to the bank.

"You will also take this note to Yardley, in the Vanderpool Building," said the cashier. "Deliver it before you go to the bank."

When he got back he found, to his surprise, that Mr. Hopkins had recovered so much as to be able to receive a visitor in his private room. The visitor was a broker who had called to make a settlement with the old trader. He left without getting one, for John Hopkins told him that he was a ruined man, and that he could have to make an assignment for the benefit of creditors. When his caller went away the old man rang for Bob. The boy went in.

"If any more gentlemen call to see me tell them to come to-morrow, as I'm not able to see them," he said.

"All right, sir. How about that cab?"

"I'm not going home until late, and, as a special favor, Bob, I wish you'd stay at the office till I go."

"All right, sir. I'll do that."

Bob walked outside and took his seat. Half an hour later the cashier, noticing him sitting by the window, asked him why he didn't go home.

"Mr. Hopkins told me to remain until he left."

Cashier True looked sourly at him and said nothing more. Just then a newsboy came in with an afternoon paper to the cashier. Bob bought a copy from him and, opening it up, the first thing he saw was the flaring headlines announcing the Wall Street panic. The first and biggest line ran as follows:

"Friday the Thirteenth Proves a Wall Street Hoodoo."

CHAPTER III.—The Old Broker's Heir.

While Bob was reading about the panic Mr. Hopkins rang for him.

"Tell Mr. True to come in here," the old broker said when the boy answered the summons.

So Bob went to the cashier's window and told him that the boss wanted him in his room.

The cashier remained a long time in the private room.

He looked rather solemn when he came out.

By that time Bob had read about everything that interested him in the paper.

Then he took up an afternoon Wall Street financial daily and went over that.

It would have been dry reading to most boys, even those connected with the district, but it wasn't to Bob.

Our young messenger liked to know about everything that was happening in the Street, and the Wall Street journals kept him well posted.

Finally five o'clock came and the clerks put up their books and papers and started for their homes.

As they passed out through the waiting-room they were surprised to see Bob still on duty.

"What's keeping you, Bob?" asked one.

"Waiting to see Mr. Hopkins home," replied the young messenger.

Mason Hopwood was last to go, and before he left, his uncle, the cashier called him over to his desk and talked with him for several moments in a low tone.

Then Mr. True went in to see the old man again.

When he came out he told Bob that Mr. Hopkins wanted to see him.

Then he put on his hat and coat and went home.

"Sit down, Bob" said the old broker, when the boy entered his room.

Bob did so, wondering what his boss had to say to him.

It was some moments before the old man spoke, during which interval he sat with his head resting on one of his hands.

"Bob, I think you've been with me something over two years," he said.

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, surprised at his words.

"I've been forty years in Wall Street, and I can unhesitatingly say that you are the best messenger I ever had."

"I'm glad that I've given you satisfaction, sir. I've done the best I knew how," answered Bob.

"I know you have, and I intend to reward you for it. Bob, I know you'll be sorry to hear that

after a lifetime spent in Wall Street, I am to-day an utterly ruined man."

"Ruined, sir!" gasped Bob.

"Beyond redemption. I was long on O. & M., and expected to make a new fortune out of it on which I could retire and spent the last few years of my life in peace and comfort. Unfortunately, I made the great mistake of holding out too long and I was caught in the slump. Even at that I might have saved myself to a certain extent, had I sold my holdings quickly at the best figure I could get. Instead of doing that, I stood in with a few other brokers and bought right and left at high figures, thinking that this might arrest the panic. We were all snowed under, and several of us were so deeply involved that recovery is impossible. Our seats at the Exchange will have to go, and all our resources, too. This disaster leaves me, at the sunset of life, practically penniless. Well, it doesn't matter for judging from my physical condition, I can't live long. Tomorrow this office will go into the hands of a receiver, whose duty it will be to wind things up for the benefit of my creditors, and in a short time you, with the rest of the force, will be out of a position. Now, Bob, I don't intend that you shall be left out utterly in the cold. You are the only person in the world for whom I have an especial regard. I have no near relatives to think of, and so I'm going to make you my heir—the heir of what little I have left to dispose of. Here is the combination of my private safe. Open it, please."

The old broker handed Bob a slip of paper on which some figures were written.

The boy took it, and following directions, soon swung the steel door open.

"Fetch me the japanned box you will find in the lefthand top compartment," said Mr. Hopkins.

Bob brought it and laid it on the desk before the old man.

The broker selected a small key from a bunch he carried on a ring and detached it from the others.

Opening the box, he took out packages of papers that looked like securities.

"This," said the old trader, holding up the top one, "is a certificate for 10,000 shares of the Sunrise Mining and Milling Co., of Paradise, Nevada. I bought it at ten cents a share, purely on speculation, as the prospects of the mine looked good at the time. It never panned out to any extent. Still, it is not a dead mine, for it is quoted to-day on the Goldfield Exchange at five cents a share. Some day it may amount to something. If it does, you will be the gainer."

Thus speaking, Mr. Hopkins replaced the certificate in the box.

"Here is a certificate for 5,000 shares of stock in the Phoenix Optical Co., of Philadelphia. It has a par value of \$1 a share. It has never paid a dividend, and I'm afraid it would be hard to find a purchaser for it at any figure. Still, it is possible something might be realized out of it, and I leave that to you to discover."

He placed the paper on top of the other.

"This certificate represents 15,000 shares in the Excelsior Copper Mine of Montana. It has no standing in the market and its value is doubtful."

The old broker went over several other papers,

all representing an interest in various companies of a problematical character and value.

Finally he took up the last one.

"This is a certificate for 40,000 shares in the Eldorado Banana Corporation, of Ceiba, Honduras. It cost me \$6,000 cash, and it is worth—whatever it may ultimately pan out. Here is some of the literature issued by the company when it put the stock on the market a year ago. It gives glowing accounts of the money to be made out of the banana industry. The par value of this stock is \$1. Some day, if the company is successful, it might reach, or exceed, that figure, and in that case, if you hold on to it, you will be worth a lot of money. On the other hand, should the company fail to make the enterprise pay, this certificate will not be worth the paper on which it is printed."

The broker locked the box and handed the key to Bob.

"Take the box home with you to-night. It is not a very valuable legacy as things stand, but with the exception of certain personal property, it is all I have to leave on which my creditors will have no legal claim. You are young, and in the course of time some of the certificates in that box will become valuable enough to give you a start in life. It is my earnest hope that they will. At any rate, I make you my heir to them, trusting that by and by you may reap enough from my legacy to cause you to remember with kindly feelings the old man who was once your employer, and who would have done better by you had it been in his power."

Bob hardly knew what to say when the old broker stopped speaking.

He wanted to thank him, but a lump came in his throat and his eyes filled with tears.

Mr. Hopkins' words left no doubt in the young messenger's mind that his employer's days as a broker were numbered, and that when he left the office that night he retired from Wall Street for good and all.

But to be obliged to retire at his age a ruined man seemed a terrible thing to the boy.

Bob felt that mere words could not express the regret he felt at parting from so good a boss as Mr. Hopkins had proved to be.

Finally he managed to thank the old broker for the box full of securities.

He felt just as grateful as if they were worth \$100,000 instead of being of doubtful value.

He said that he appreciated the kindness that induced Mr. Hopkins to select him as heir to his last remaining property.

"But what are you going to do, sir? You have money enough to live on, I hope, otherwise I couldn't think of accepting your gift," he said.

The old broker favored him with a queer smile.

"Don't worry about my future, Bob. I have more than enough to see me through the last of my life. In making you my heir I have not robbed myself at all, but have simply put a chance in your way of getting a start in life. This box of certificates is not all I possess. When I am dead you will receive a paper, legally executed, entitling you to the rest of your legacy. So you see that I intend you as my sole heir, since I have no one else to leave my little property to."

"You are very kind, sir, to honor me in this way," replied Bob.

"Don't mention it, my lad. You fully deserve this small recognition on my part, and I bestow it on you because I desire to help you."

"I suppose you will be down as usual to-morrow, sir?" said the boy.

"No man can say with certainty what the morrow will bring forth," replied Mr. Hopkins, solemnly. "I am an old man, and the unexpected reverse I have suffered to-day is a hard thing for me to bear up under. It is quite possible I may not be here to-morrow. In that event, you will receive a letter in the morning mail. Now, if you will go out and order a cab, I will go home."

Bob hurried out into Broad Street and found one of the few remaining vehicles at its stand in the street.

He brought it around to the door of the building and then returned to the office to assist Mr. Hopkins downstairs.

"Shall I go uptown with you, sir?" asked Bob.

"Yes, I think you had better. I may need your aid in getting to my apartments."

So Bob placed the japaned box in the cab and got in himself.

On the ride uptown the broker became quite cheerful, and when the young messenger helped him to the elevator in the bachelor apartment house where he lived, and afterward into his suite of rooms on the second floor, he seemed in better spirits than at any time since the panic overtook the market.

"Good-by, Bob," said Mr. Hopkins, when the boy was ready to go. "Good-by, and may Heaven bless and prosper you."

The old broker held out his hand, Bob took it, and so they parted, the boy little thinking that he would never see the old man alive again.

CHAPTER IV.—A Break Up At The Office.

Next morning's papers were filled with the particulars of the panic in the Stock Exchange, and they printed the names of many brokerage firms who were believed to be hard hit by the slump.

Old John Hopkins' name appeared in the list, and it was intimated that his assignment would be announced at the opening of the Exchange.

Bob turned up at the office at his usual time.

He was reading a second account of the panic when the clerks began to arrive.

They had read what the papers said about John Hopkin's failure and were much concerned, for if the business went up the spout they would all be thrown out of steady jobs.

They gathered together in the counting-room and began to discuss the situation.

Mason Hopwood was the last to arrive.

As he hung up his coat and hat one of the clerks asked him what he thought of the newspaper statement about Mr. Hopkins.

"What do I think?" he replied, with a short laugh. "That we'll all be hustling for another job in a short time."

"Then you think that the boss is up against the wall?"

"I don't think it, I know it," replied Hopwood.

"The old man told my uncle that he was cleaned out down to his last dollar, and that he would have to make an assignment."

"Then I'm afraid this business will be wound up."

"I'd like to bet a dollar to a dime that it will."

"That's hard luck all around," replied the other clerk, walking away to communicate the news to the rest of the force.

At that moment the telephone bell rang and Hopwood answered it. The superintendent of the apartment house where Mr. Hopkins lived was at the other end of the wire. He informed Hopwood that the old broker had just been found dead in his bed. As Hopwood was telling this startling news to the clerks, his uncle came in. He repeated the message to Mr. True.

"Dead!" exclaimed the cashier. "Well, I can't say I'm particularly surprised. After the mauling he got at the Exchange, and the slump that cleaned him out, it is not to be wondered at that a man of his age should peter out."

Neither the cashier nor his nephew seemed to be much depressed by the sad intelligence of their employer's death. They knew he was down and out financially, anyway. The other employees were more or less shocked, however, for they all liked the old man, and had found him a kind and considerate boss. Bob didn't learn the news until fifteen minutes later when the cashier called him to his window and told him abruptly that Mr. Hopkins was dead.

"Good Lord! You don't mean that, Mr. True?" cried the boy, aghast.

"I'm telling you what came over the 'phone from the superintendent of the building where he lived," replied the cashier, tartly.

"Why, I left him at his rooms in good spirits and apparently much better last evening about seven o'clock," said Bob.

"Well, he died some time during the night just the same."

"Gee! That's terrible!"

Bob turned away, feeling greatly cut up, and went inside to see Edna Prescott. He found her crying at her table, for she had a great regard for the old broker.

"It's tough, isn't it, Edna?" said Bob.

"Oh, I can hardly believe it is true," she said, wiping her eyes. "Such a dear old gentleman he was. And yesterday he seemed to be as well as I ever saw him."

Bob told her how he had gone home in a cab with Mr. Hopkins about six o'clock.

"He was greatly depressed when we left the office, but he brightened up during the ride," Bob said. "I expected to see him down this morning by ten at any rate. And now he is dead. It hardly seems possible, though it is true he suffered a terrible shock from the slump, and he was hurt at the Exchange."

"The papers say he was ruined by the collapse of the market."

"That is true, for he told me so himself. He said he wouldn't have a dollar left."

"Here's a letter for you, Brown," said one of the clerks at that juncture, handing him an oblong envelope.

He saw that the superscription was in his late employer's writing, and he tore the envelope open. A letter and a paper dropped out. The former ran as follows:

"Robert Brown—My dear young friend. When you receive this I will be out of all my earthly

troubles. A penniless old man like myself is only in the way in this world. Oblivion and the grave are all that is left to him, and I gladly welcome both as a happy release from my troubles. I enclose a paper, certified to by a notary, which makes over to you, as my heir, all of the personal property contained in my apartments. I advise you to sell everything and put the proceeds in a bank for your future benefit. Wishing you a long life, success and a happier end than fate has meted out to me, I remain, your friend and well-wisher.

"JOHN HOPKINS."

The paper, which conveyed all the old broker's effects to Bob, was witnessed by one of the tenants of the apartment house, and bore the seal and signature of the notary who drew the document up. Bob showed both the letter and the paper to Edna, but he said nothing to her about the box of securities which the old man had given him before they left the office together the afternoon before.

"He must have thought a great deal of you, Bob," she said.

"He spoke and acted as if he did, and this paper is added proof of the fact," replied the young messenger.

The cashier had received a letter also from the late broker.

It contained a notice of his assignment to a certain trader, and a few directions as to what he should do pending the appearance of the assignee.

The cashier prepared a notice to put on the door, and then told all hands that the office would be closed until the assignee took possession.

Bob at once went up to his late employer's apartments.

He presented the paper which made him the owner of the late broker's effects and said he would take charge of things and see that Mr. Hopkins was suitably buried.

The superintendent told him that nothing could be done until the coroner had called and investigated the broker's death.

An autopsy showed that Mr. Hopkins had died from the effects of an overdose of a certain medicine he had been taking for his heart.

Whether he had taken the undue quantity by accident or designedly could not be determined, so the dead man, in spite of the suspicion that his failure might have induced him to take his own life, was given the benefit of the doubt.

As soon as the coroner issued a permit Bob hired an undertaker.

His funeral was attended by all of the employees of the office who were greatly surprised to find that Bob was in charge of the arrangements.

After the funeral Bob picked out certain things that he decided to keep to remember Mr. Hopkins by, and the rest he sold, and paid the expense of the funeral out of what he got for the old man's property.

There was a balance of about \$600 left over, and this Bob added to his capital of \$750.

When the assignee took charge of the office, the cashier, his nephew and Bob were the only employees retained, and they were told that their engagement would be but for a limited time.

"I suppose you're going to look for another position right away, Edna," said Bob, after the stenographer was paid what was due her.

"Yes, Bob. It's too bad that we won't be together any longer," she replied.

"It certainly is. You must send me word where you have caught on and I'll call up and see you. I don't want to lose sight of you if I can help it."

The girl laughed, and said she would let him know her new business address as soon as she secured a position.

"You'll be carrying messages for somebody else soon, I suppose?" she added.

"Maybe I will and maybe I won't," he answered.

"Am I to understand that you are thinking of applying for a clerkship instead of a messenger's position?" she said.

"No."

"What then?"

"I may decide to do business on my own hook."

"What kind of business?"

"Speculate on the market perhaps."

"That's rather a hazardous business, I should think."

"Yes, it is risky. But a person has got to take chances to win."

"I should imagine that Wall Street is the worst place in the world to take chances. The fate of poor Mr. Hopkins ought to be a warning to you."

"Don't you worry about me, Edna. I'm not going to get lost in the shuffle if I can help myself."

"I hope you won't; but if you expect to make a living out of the stock market I'm afraid you'll be disappointed."

"Oh, I don't know. There are two or three ex-messenger boys doing it to my certain knowledge, and I guess I stand as good a show as they do."

"Well, you have my best wishes for your success."

"Thank you, Edna, I know you mean that. If I should become a broker I'll hire you as my stenographer if you'll come to work for me," laughed the boy.

"Are you thinking of becoming a broker some day?" she smiled.

"Stranger things than that have happened," he chuckled.

"That's true. Well, good-by till I see you again," she said, holding out her hand to him.

"Aren't you going to say good-by to me, too?" asked the voice of Mason Hopwood behind them.

"Good-by, Mr. Hopwood," replied the girl, without offering her hand.

"I think I know where you can get a job right away, Miss Prescott," said the clerk, fondling his incipient mustache.

"Indeed?"

"I happen to know that Mr. Wessel, a money-lender, in the Sherwood Building, is in need of a stenographer. I shall be glad to give you a note to him recommending you as being fully capable of filling the bill."

"You are acquainted with him then?"

"Of course. Shall I give you the letter?"

Edna hesitated, for she didn't care to be under an obligation to Hopwood, whom she didn't like for very good reasons.

Still, it was necessary that she get a position as soon as possible, so she told him she'd take the letter.

"I have it already written," he said with a smirk, taking an envelope from his pocket and handing it to her with a bow. "Take it around to

him right away and you'll get the position," he added, with a confident smile.

"Thank you for your kindness, Mr. Hopwood."

"Don't mention it. It is a pleasure for me to do anything for you."

He put an accent on the you and favored her with a languishing look that made her regret she had accepted his recommendation.

However, it was too late to reconsider the matter now, so with a slight bow she put the letter in her bag, and walked to the corridor door with Bob.

"I hope you catch on, Edna," he said.

"If it wasn't that I can't afford to be out of work any longer than I can help, I'd rather not be indebted to Mr. Hopwood for a position," she replied.

"Oh don't worry about him. You probably won't see him soon again."

"I hope not," she replied with some emphasis, and then she shook hands with Bob again and started for the elevator.

CHAPTER V.—Bob Gets Hold of a Tip.

A few days after the old broker had been laid away in his last resting-place, Bob began to investigate the value of the securities in the japanned tin box.

He prosecuted his inquiries chiefly after he was through with his duties at the office, which embraced not only messenger service, but desk work as well.

He found that the certificate for 10,000 shares of Sunrise Mining & Milling stock was worth nominally \$500; but the question was to find a purchaser at that figure.

A Broad Street broker, to whom he applied for information about the stock, offered him \$250 for the certificate, but Bob declined to sell it below its quoted value.

He found out the address of the Phoenix Optical Co., in Philadelphia, and wrote to the secretary telling him that he had come into possession of 5,000 shares of the company's stock, and requesting him to let him know what it was worth.

In due time he received a reply informing him that the stock was of rather uncertain value at present, as the company was not yet in a financial position to declare its first dividend.

He advised Bob to forward the certificate so that the stock could be transferred to his name on the company's books, promising to return it in due course.

"The company," he wrote, "has acquired and is using several valuable patents bearing on optics. We also control the right to manufacture, on a royalty, the new convex lens in eye-glasses which will eventually revolutionize the trade and bring us in a big profit. At present the cost of these lenses interferes with an extended sale, notwithstanding their undoubted superiority to any other lens heretofore put on the market. When the public has been educated to the manifest advantages possessed by glasses built on the only right principle covered by our patent rights, we may look for a large and growing sale for that branch of our business. In my opinion, the future of the company is a bright one, and its stock should, in

a year or two, be easily worth its par value of \$2. I would therefore strongly advise you to hold onto your certificate as a valuable investment of the future."

Bob sent on the certificate and decided that the stock might turn out to be a valuable asset in time. When he looked into the Excelsior Copper Mining Co. of Montana, he found that the only person who could give him any information on the subject was the proprietor of a mining bureau on Grand Street, named Isaac Blum. He visited Mr. Blum's office about one o'clock on Saturday afternoon and found a young clerk in charge. That individual told Bob that Mr. Blum was out West.

"We haven't had any call for Excelsior Copper in several months," he said. "I couldn't tell you what it might bring if we found a customer who wanted some of it. It is not listed on any of the exchanges, and therefore has no quotable price. Call in later and see Mr. Blum, or you can leave your name and address, together with the number of shares you own, and should any inquiries be made by a prospective purchaser, we will communicate with you. We charge one-half a cent a share for selling stock that brings under twenty cents. Our minimum commission on any deal is \$1.25. How many shares of Excelsior Copper have you?"

"Fifteen thousand," replied Bob.

"That's quite a block. Will I take down your name and address, or shall you call again and see Mr. Blum?"

"I will probably call, but you can take my name and address, anyway."

The clerk took Bob's name, his office address, and the number of shares of Excelsior Copper he owned, and then the young messenger went away not much impressed with the possible value of the stock. The certificate that interested Bob more than any other was that calling for 40,000 shares of the Eldorado Banana Corporation. The reason of this was because he was much taken with the glowing prospectus issued months before by the company when in the hands of its promoters. This prospectus Bob found folded up with the certificate. It showed that the plantation, which had cost \$15,000 and extended two miles along a certain river and was a mile wide, was located in Honduras, Central America, within easy distance of the shipping port of Ceiba. Nearly a dozen good reasons were given why the stock, offered both for cash at a discount and on the instalment plan of ten payments, at 20 cents a share, would prove a highly profitable investment. Pictures reproduced from photographs were given of different parts of the plantation, of the port of Ceiba and neighboring Honduran scenery. There was also an entertaining description of the banana industry from which Bob learned that sixty million dollars' worth of the fruit was imported annually to the United States. The company promised a dividend in ten months, so Bob wrote to the New Orleans address to see what he could learn about the present condition of things.

While awaiting a reply to his letter he looked up the other stock of his legacy from the old broker. None of it appeared to be worth much, from which fact Bob came to the conclusion that the old man had been an easy mark for promoters in his later years. One day while on an errand to the Mills Building for the assignee, Bob over-

heard a well-known operator telling the broker he had brought a note to about a syndicate in which he was interested which had been formed to corner J. & N. shares, then selling low in the market. Bob found out that this particular broker was in the habit of getting tips from this operator, and paying him ten per cent, of his profits for the advance information. The boy learned enough to convince him that he had got onto a good thing, so at the first chance he got, he visited the little bank and left an order for 130 shares of J. & N., which the bank bought for him at 66. Then he passed the pointer on to his friend Dick Smart, who immediately availed himself of it to the extent of his pile.

"How long do you expect your job is going to hold out?" asked Dick a day or two later, when he met Bob walking leisurely back toward his office after delivering a message.

"I couldn't tell you. We're not doing any brokerage business now. Just settling up things so as to pay off the creditors as near 100 cents on the dollar as possible."

"Are you on the lookout for another job?"

"No. I think I'll be my own boss when I'm through with my present place."

"Then you really have made up your mind to become a regular speculator?"

"Yes. If I am fortunate enough to accumulate sufficient capital I may in time hang my shingle out as a broker."

"I'll be your first customer," laughed Dick.

"All right. See that you keep your word," replied Bob, walking off.

Next day J. & N. moved up to 68. On his way to lunch Bob met Edna Prescott returning to her new office from hers.

"Glad to see you, Edna," said Bob, shaking hands with her. "I haven't had a chance to drop up and see you yet, but I will in a day or two."

"I'm afraid you'd better not," she replied. "Mr. Wessel is in all day till half-past four, when he closes up, and I don't think he'd like me to have any visitors."

"Oh, all right, I won't intrude, then. I'll wait outside in the corridor some day around half-past four and see you when you come out."

"That would be better."

"How do you like your new boss?"

"I can't say that he impresses me any too favorably."

"Is he a crank?"

"He hasn't the sweetest disposition in the world. What I object to, however, is his growing familiarity. I would much prefer that he would confine his conversation strictly to business."

"Maybe the old rascal is falling in love with you," laughed Bob.

"I don't see anything amusing in that. He's old enough to be my grandfather."

"Some men are never too old to fall in love with a pretty girl like yourself," chuckled Bob.

"I've seen your boss a number of times on the street, and I noticed that he dresses like a dude. He's always barbered up to beat the band and sports patent leathers and a fresh boutonniere every day. I've heard the brokers make all kinds of fun of him behind his back, though they are careful not to do it before him, for they often find it necessary to borrow money from him—on gilt-edge security, of course, and it wouldn't be good policy to offend him."

"There is another thing I don't like, too."

"What is that?"

"Mr. Hopwood has been up twice to see me."

"He has, eh?"

"Yes. The first time I didn't mind, for he only stayed a minute, and merely asked me how I liked my new position. The second time he met me in the corridor. I am almost sure that he was waiting there for me to come out, though he professed surprise at seeing me off so early. How is it that he got away from his desk at that hour?"

"We only work till four or a quarter past. You don't seem to appreciate the honor Mr. Hopwood does you by calling up and waiting for you in the corridor," smiled Bob.

"No, I don't. I much prefer his room to his company."

"He'd be mad if he heard you say that."

"I can't help it. I never did like him, and I never will."

"He lords it over me in great shape nowadays," replied Bob. "I am doing desk work now when not out on an errand, and I get my orders through him. As the assignee is seldom at the office over an hour a day, Hopwood's uncle is running things as near to suit himself as he dares. Hopwood loafs a lot of the time and I am doing a good bit of his work. I guess he and his uncle are trying to make the snap last as long as possible."

"Well, I mustn't stand here talking with you any longer, Bob, or Mr. Wessel might think I'm taking too much time at my lunch. I'll expect to see you around some day soon at half-past four."

"What time do you get off on Saturday?"

"One o'clock."

"Well, look for me at one on Saturday, and I'll see you up to the bridge and put you on your car."

"Very well; I'll expect to see you on Saturday in the corridor near the elevators a little after one."

"I'll be there," and, raising his hat, Bob walked off to his own particular lunch house, unaware that Hopwood had been watching the interview from the doorway of a nearby office building.

CHAPTER VI.—Edna's Embarrassing Predicament.

When Bob got back from his lunch he found Hopwood alone in the office, his uncle having gone to a Beaver Street restaurant.

"Look here, Brown, who gave you permission to take your own time at lunch?" demanded Hopwood, glaring at the boy.

"I'm entitled to a half hour, ain't I?" returned Bob.

"You've been out three-quarters of an hour."

"I guess not. I left the office at eight minutes of one, and it is now twenty-seven minutes past one. I've only taken five minutes extra."

"Well, you haven't any right to take five minutes extra."

"What difference does it make to you?"

"Don't talk back to me in that way. Remember, I'm your boss."

"Are you? I thought Mr. White, the assignee, was my boss."

"You know what I mean. You get your orders through me, and it's my place to see that you attend to business when you're in the office."

"Don't I attend to business? You haven't found me loafing any, have you?"

"You wouldn't dare loaf, for I have my eye on you."

"Is that all you're paid to do—watch me?"

"It's none of your business what I'm paid to do. If you aren't more respectful to me, I'll see that you're bounced."

"I guess it won't be a great while before we're all bounced, then your graft will be over."

"What's that?" roared Hopwood, turning red with anger.

"You heard what I said. Do you think I'm a fool and don't see how you are putting in your time? I'm doing half of your work besides running errands. If any one is earning his wages here I am that party. I'm not kicking, however. I don't care whether you work at all; but I won't have you jumping on my neck for nothing."

"I'll fix you, see if I don't," gritted Hopwood.

"I suppose you'll report me to your uncle. Well, go on and do so. I'm not stuck on this job, which won't last a great while, anyway. Suppose your uncle fires me on Saturday, and then suppose I call on the assignee and tell him how things are running here, how would you like that?"

Hopwood gave a gasp, and had nothing more to say for five minutes. During that time he did some thinking. Then he humbled himself so much as to walk over to Bob's desk and try to make the matter up. Bob saw that he had scared him by his suggestion about making Mr. White wise as to the way things were going on in the office, though he had no intention of doing such a thing even if he was bounced. He was not a talebearer, but he knew that Hopwood was fully capable of carrying stories on very slight provocation. During the balance of the afternoon Hopwood was unusually subdued and did more work than usual, which fact made Bob chuckle.

A few minutes after three Bob got a chance to look at the office ticker, and he saw that J. & N. had closed at 68 1-2. On paper he was nearly \$260 to the good, which was a very satisfactory thought. Next day, which was Friday, the stock continued to advance, and toward the close of the day's business was quoted at 70. Many traders had noticed the rise in J. & N. and a great deal of the stock was bought and sold. Dick Smart dropped in to say a few words to Bob, and the subject was, of course, the deals in which they both were interested.

On the following morning the papers incidentally mentioned J. & N. as a good stock to watch, as it seemed likely to go up several points higher. Bob and Dick read the newspaper statements, and they thought to themselves that the financial editors had long heads. They didn't expect that J. & N. would boom for several days yet; but it is the unexpected that is always happening. At eleven o'clock it was going at 71, with quite a crowd of traders around the standard, some of them buying or selling it, but the majority watching closely to see how the cat was going to jump. The "cat" got busy when a big broker appeared on the floor and began to bid for the stock at rising figures. That started a whole lot of excitement, and a score of brokers jumped in and began bidding for the stock, too. For fifteen or twenty minutes a lot of shares were offered and taken in, and then it

became scarce. The big broker then started to bid higher and higher, but got very few offers, the larger part being from traders having no stock, who sold short in expectation that there would soon be a decline that would enable them to cover their sales at a profit.

At twenty minutes to twelve there was no sign of a slump in sight, and buyers became more plentiful than ever. The price jumped up and up at bounds, and when the chairman brought the day's session to a close at noon, J. & N. was roosting comfortably at 82—a rise of twelve points since morning. Both Bob and Dick discovered the boom from the quotations on their office tickers and were jubilant. Bob noticed that Hopwood asked leave to go out about half-past eleven, and he guessed it had something to do with the market, for he knew that Hopwood speculated right along, though he could not tell whether the cashier's nephew was particularly successful at the game or not. It is true he always seemed to have plenty of money in his clothes, but as Hopwood was a pretty good bluffer, it wasn't at all certain that he was well fixed. At any rate, Bob had noticed Hopwood looking at the ticker pretty often that morning, so he had an idea he went out to buy some J. & N. on margin.

Bob and Dick certainly had cause to feel jubilant that morning. J. & N. had gone up sixteen points above what they had paid for it, and that represented a profit of about \$2,000 to the former. As Dick was in on only thirty shares, he was about \$450 ahead. As soon as his office closed at half-past twelve Bob ran over to Dick's place and found his friend impatiently waiting for the cashier to ante up his pay envelope.

"What do you think of J. & N., Dick?" asked Bob.

"I think it's all to the mustard. Gee! I had no idea that it was going to boom so soon."

"Neither did I. I didn't look for results much before a week."

"You got hold of that tip just in the nick of time."

"I guess I did. Now the question is, how much higher is the stock likely to go?"

"Ask me something easy, Bob. You know what the market is. It is no more to be depended on than the hind legs of a mule. I've a great mind to cash in first thing Monday morning and make sure of what is in sight."

"Something might happen before Monday to upset your plans and land us both in the soup."

"It might, but it's my opinion it won't. I'm willing to bet that the syndicate back of J. & N. is strong enough to hold the market safe until the time comes to unload."

"That's my opinion, therefore, I don't mean to sell my shares a while yet. I believe the price will go to 90 all right."

"Are you going to hold on for 90?"

"That will depend on how things pan out Monday morning at the Exchange."

The boys talked the matter over a while longer, then Bob said he had an engagement and would have to go. He had promised to meet Edna Prescott near the elevators in the corridor of the building where she was employed, and he didn't want to keep her waiting. When he got out of the elevator who should he see strutting up and down not far from Mr. Wessel's door but Mason Hopwood. Bob didn't require the gift of second

sight to understand what had brought him there. The magnet that attracted him was Edna. Bob drew back into the shadow of the elevator shaft and waited to see what would happen when the fair stenographer appeared.

In about five minutes the girl came out, but she was accompanied by the old dude, Wessel, himself. She looked hastily around for Bob, but didn't see him. She saw Hopwood instead. He was clearly disgusted on observing that Wessel was with her. He had counted on a quiet tete-a-tete with the pretty girl, but his hopes were nipped in the bud. Mr. Wessel figured on seeing his stenographer to her car, and he didn't take Hopwood's presence kindly. Each regarded the case as one where two are company and three a crowd. Neither, however, had any intention of withdrawing from the scene.

"Good afternoon, Miss Prescott," said Hopwood, in his politest manner. "This is an unexpected pleasure."

Edna knew better. She was sure he had been waiting for her, and she returned his bow rather coldly without speaking. Hopwood ignored her frigid demeanor and, turning to the money-lender, said quite blandly, "How do you do, Mr. Wessel? In a hurry to catch the elevator, I suppose, so I won't detain you. I have a few words to say to Miss Prescott."

"Miss Prescott is in a great hurry to reach her car, and as I am going with her, we'll bid you good afternoon," returned the money-lender, glaring at Hopwood. "Come, Miss Prescott, permit me," and the old dude had the nerve to seize her by the arm and lead her toward the elevator.

Hopwood, feeling that he had been turned down, was as mad as a hornet. Edna looked embarrassed and nervous. Mr. Wessel had taken possession of her as if he had acquired a right to act as her escort, and she didn't want to be seen on the street in company with her dudish employer. How she was going to shake him without insulting him was a serious problem to her. She was almost angry with Bob for not being on hand, as she thought, to help her out of her predicament. Hopwood recovered from his discomfiture and, resolving that Wessel shouldn't have anything on him where Edna was concerned if he could help it, hastened after the money-lender and the stenographer. Then it was that Bob concluded it was time to show himself. Edna uttered a little exclamation of delight and relief when she saw him. Breaking away from her employer, she ran to him and, grasping him by the arm before he could say a word, whispered:

"Take me away, quick. Let's run downstairs."

She fairly pulled the boy with her in her eagerness to get away from Wessel and Hopwood.

"They're not following us, are they?" she fluttered, as they hurried down the flight of marble stairs.

"No. It seems almost a shame to give them such a cold shake," he chuckled.

"How can you say that, Bob," pouted the girl, "when you know I'm only too glad to get rid of them? I never was so embarrassed in my life. Why, that ridiculous old man actually had the assurance to tell Mr. Hopwood that he was going to see me to my car. I should have been too mortified for anything if anybody I knew saw me walking with him. If he was a respectable looking man like poor dear old Mr. Hopkins, who al-

ways treated me with the greatest deference, I wouldn't mind walking with him a few blocks, provided I needed an escort; but when an old man like Mr. Wessel gets himself up like a fashion plate I simply can't be seen in his company."

"Well, I can't blame you feeling that way. I think he's got a lot of nerve to force his society on you after office hours," said Bob. "He hires your services as a stenographer and typist for a certain sum a week. He is only entitled to what he pays you for. If he doesn't cut his personal attentions out I'd look for another job if I were you."

"I mean to right away. I don't care for him as an employer, and the sooner I can make a change the better I'll be pleased," replied Edna.

They walked down the three flights and then went out by the Pine Street entrance to avoid the possibility of meeting Wessel and Hopwood at the main door.

CHAPTER VII.—Bob Makes a Good Haul Out of J. & N.

Bob was seated on his high stool before his desk Monday morning reading the "Wall Street Argus" when Hopwood came in.

"Good morning, Mr. Hopwood," said the boy, with his customary courtesy.

Hopwood growled out some kind of a reply and glared at Bob in an unfriendly way. He went to the safe, opened it, took out the books and papers he and the boy were working on, and then called Bob to come and get those he was using. He seemed on the point of saying something, but reconsidered the matter, and Bob carried one of the books and several of the papers to his desk. The boy knew he was sore on him because he had called after Edna on Saturday and they had skipped down the stairway together instead of waiting for an elevator. Of course, Hopwood had seen that it was Edna who dragged Bob down the stairs, thereby showing her eagerness to get away from Wessel and himself, but as he couldn't get back at the girl, it would have pleased him to get square with Bob, whom he blamed as a butter-in. He laid his own work out on his desk, but he didn't get down to business like his assistant.

He took up a morning newspaper and read till his uncle came in at a quarter of ten, then he made a great bluff of being busy. At a quarter past ten he walked out into the waiting-room and spent a few minutes over the ticker watching J. & N. which had opened at 83 and was now up to 84, with every prospect of going higher. The assignee, Mr. White, came in about half-past ten and called Mr. True into his private room. A few minutes afterward Bob was called on to carry a message to a certain broker in the Astor Building. The broker was engaged when Bob reached his office, so he had a chance to look at the tape that hung down into the basket and thus get a line on J. & N. He saw that it was up to 84 5-8.

"I'm over \$300 better off than I was when I reached the office this morning," he said to himself, with a feeling of satisfaction. "I could sell out now and clean up \$2,300 easily enough, but I guess it's safe enough to hold out for 90."

When he left the broker's office he met three messenger boys he knew who were waiting for an elevator to take them downstairs. They were

talking about the rise in J. & N., in which one of them was interested to the extent of five shares.

"Hello, Brown," said one of them. "I don't see so much of you as usual. Your office is in the hands of a receiver, isn't it?"

"There's an assignee in charge. I guess he acts about the same as a receiver. He's winding up the business."

"Then you'll be out of a job when he's through?" said another boy.

"That fact doesn't worry me any."

"Have you another posish in view?"

"No."

"I suppose you're looking for me?"

"No."

"You're foolish to wait till you're out. If I was in your shoes I'd hunt one up right away. It doesn't pay to be out of work."

"I think I'll open up an office and work for myself."

"An office!" cried the boys in chorus, as they piled into the elevator which had just stopped to take them aboard.

"Say, Brown, where would you get the coin to pay the rent of an office?" asked one of the crowd as the cage shot down.

"Oh, my friend Morgan is going to back me with a million or two," laughed Bob.

"Is that so?" chuckled one of the messengers. "Why don't you ask him for five or ten million while you're about it?"

"Oh, a million or two will be enough to give me a start," replied Bob, as they stepped cut into the main corridor.

The bunch laughed, for they believed Bob was kidding them about hiring an office, or even desk room in somebody else's office. They looked on Bob as a messenger still, and messengers were not in the habit of hiring offices for themselves when they lost their jobs. When they reached the street they scattered, and Bob returned to his own place of business with an answer from the broker he had taken the note to. This he handed to the assignee, and then after a glance at the tape, which showed that J. & N. was up to 85, he returned to his desk. At half-past twelve he went to lunch, looking at the ticker on his way out. The stock he was interested in was now going at 90. He decided that he wouldn't take any more chances with it, so before going to the restaurant he frequented, he ran into the little bank and ordered his shares sold. When he got back to the office he saw that J. & N. was ruling at 91.

"Well, it might go to par if the syndicate is able to force it up that high, but I'm satisfied with what I've made out of it."

Figuring that his shares had been sold at 90, or perhaps a fraction above that, he calculated he had made at least \$3,000, which, added to the sum he had already made out of the market and saved up, would give him a capital of \$4,500.

"I guess I don't need to look for another job. I haven't anybody dependent on me. I'll branch out on my own hook as a speculator. I can hire desk room for a while and then take an office when I have made more money. I'll then be independent, go and come as I choose, and not be at the beck and call of a broker for nine or ten dollars a week. If I'm any way fortunate, I can make more money out of one deal than I'd make in a year or two running my legs off as a messenger."

That's the way Bob thought about his immediate future as he worked over his task in hand. Hopwood wasn't in the office, being out to his own lunch. He took a full hour himself, and wasn't particular if he stayed out longer, for his uncle didn't call him down for a little thing like that. When he came in about ten minutes after Bob he looked quite excited and exultant, like a person who was feeling uncommonly good. He had evidently taken several "high balls," for his face was flushed and his eyes danced in a peculiar way. He went to his desk and stood looking at his work. Then he went to one of the windows and looked out on Wall Street. As soon as his uncle went to lunch he slipped over to the ticker and stayed there. Bob worked along just as faithfully as if somebody was standing over him. At length he found it necessary to ask for some instructions, and he went out to see Hopwood. The clerk's grouch against him had either worn off or was forgotten for the time being, for he answered Bob in a friendly kind of way, and showed him how the work should be done. As the boy was turning away Hopwood said:

"I've made a pile of money since Saturday morning."

"Have you? Then you're lucky," answered Bob.

"I bought 100 shares of J. & N. when it was down to 69 and now it's up to 93."

"Why don't you sell out then?"

"Because it's going up to par."

"How do you know it is?"

"I'm sure of it."

"You're lucky to be sure of what's going to happen in Wall Street."

"I've been six years in the Street and ought to be able to judge how the market is going by this time," replied Hopwood confidently.

"That so? Well, Mr. Hopkins was forty years in Wall Street, and yet he often got caught through over-confidence. If he'd sold his O. & M. before the slump came on I've no doubt he'd be alive today and well off. Instead of which he is now resting in a poor man's grave. If you've got 100 shares of J. & N. at this moment, I'd advise you to run out and sell it."

"What do you know about stocks?" sneered Hopwood.

"Not much, but I think I'm giving you good advice just the same."

"A messenger boy like you don't know anything about the market. Look there," holding up the tape, "J. & N. is up to 93 3-8."

Bob took up the tape from the basket and looked at the transactions in J. & N. They mostly ran in 1,000 share lots and upward. The deals were frequent, too, from which he suspected that the syndicate was unloading its holdings on the brokers and the general public. The price might go to 100, but he doubted it. At any rate, he thought Hopwood was a fool for holding on with such a fine profit in sight. He returned to his desk and presently Hopwood went back to his and began to work. Mr. True came in shortly afterward and for the next half hour no sound was heard in the room but the movements of the three employees and the rapid clicking of the indicator outside. Then the cashier sent Bob into the private office for a book. On his way back he took a look at the tape, curious to see how high J. & N. was now. The quotations were coming

out fast and showed every sign of a slump. The last sale had been made at 90.

"I'll have to put Hopwood wise and give him a chance to save himself," thought Bob, whose nature inclined him to be generous even to an enemy.

So as soon as he handed the book to Mr. True, he went to Hopwood's desk.

"There's a slump on in J. & N. and it's down to 90. You'd better run out and sell your 100 shares," he said.

Hopwood, without a word of thanks for the warning, made a rush for the ticker. When he saw what was happening, he ran back for his hat and, without asking permission of his uncle, rushed out of the office like a wild man, much to Mr. True's surprise. He was gone until after three, and when he showed up he looked grouchy. Bob never learned how he came out on his deal, but the fact was he managed to get out with about half of the profit he had expected to make.

CHAPTER VIII.—Bob Hires An Office.

About a week after the end of the J. & N. boom the assignee had wound up the business of the late Mr. Hopkins so far that he found it unnecessary to longer retain the office or the three employees who had helped him out. Accordingly, Mr. True, Hopwood and Bob were paid off to the end of the week and told that their services were no longer needed. The furniture, safes and other furnishings were sent to an auctioneer's place to be sold to the highest bidder, and the name of John Hopkins was removed from the door, thus wiping out the memory of a man who had spent the greater part of a long and useful life in Wall Street.

While the moving men were taking the stuff out of the office, Bob came up to take a last look at his late stamping grounds. A well-dressed man was talking to the assignee about renting the large office from him. Mr. White wanted to rent the two rooms together until the lease was up on the ensuing first of May. The applicant, whose name was Rider, didn't want the small room, and tried to persuade Mr. White to let him have the large room only. They couldn't come to an arrangement, so Mr. Rider said he would think it over and let Mr. White know next day. Bob had been doing a lot of thinking while the men were talking. His original intention was to rent desk room in some office on Wall Street and make the place his headquarters. When he heard that the applicant for the big office didn't want the small one, it struck him that he'd like to take it if he could make a deal for it, either with Mr. White or the other gentleman. So when Mr. Rider left, Bob followed him outside and told him he could get him a tenant for the small room if he took both, provided he would let it for \$70 a month.

"Who wants it?" asked the gentleman.

"Well, if you want to know the truth I want it," replied Bob.

"You want it?" ejaculated Mr. Rider in surprise. "What use can you have for it?"

"I can make use of it all right. If you'll rent it to me for \$70 I'll pay you the rent in advance to the first of May—seven months."

"You can afford to do that, can you?"

"If I couldn't I wouldn't make you the offer."

"What's your name?"

"Robert Brown."

"What do you want to use the room for?"

"Simply as a private office."

"What business do you intend to carry on there?"

"I intend to buy and sell stocks."

"You look young to be a broker."

"Oh, I'm just starting in, and expect to grow up by degrees."

"Where are you located at present?"

"I have no office yet. I want one, that's why I'm trying to get that small room."

"You can furnish references, I suppose?"

"I can; but money is as good referenc as you want, isn't it?"

"It's pretty good. Well, there's my card. Come up and see me tomorrow morning and I'll give you an answer."

Next morning Bob called on Mr. Rider.

"Well, young man. I'll accept your offer of seven months rent in advance for the small room. When can you bring the money?"

"Have you taken the rooms?" asked Bob.

"Not yet, but I will as soon as you show me that you mean business."

"Here's \$50 on account. I'll give you the balance as soon as you show me the transferred lease of the suite."

"I see you're quite a business boy," smiled the gentleman. "You're not taking any chances."

"No, sir; that isn't business."

"All right, young man. I rather admire your sharpness. It shows you know the ropes. I'll accept your deposit on account. Call back about one o'clock with the balance and by that time I'll have the lease in my possession if Mr. White hasn't rented the rooms in the meanwhile."

Bob took his receipt for the \$50 and went over to the gallery of the Exchange to put in his time. At half-past twelve he went to lunch and shortly after one he was back in Mr. Rider's office. That gentleman showed him the lease of the rooms, duly transferred to him. Bob was satisfied and paid over the rest of the seven months' rent of the small room, getting his receipt therefore.

"When can I have possession?" he asked.

"At once. You will get the key from the janitor. I'll give you a note to him."

As soon as Bob got possession of the office he called on the auctioneer to find out when the safes and office furniture would be put up for sale. He was told they had been advertised with other stuff for the next morning at eleven o'clock. After lunch Bob hired a painter to put his name on the door. To his name he added the words "Stocks and Bonds" for the fun of the thing, though he didn't expect to do any business in the brokerage line until he had secured a sufficient capital. Next morning at eleven he appeared at the auction rooms on Liberty Street. He had a list of what he intended to bid for and waited for the articles to be put in. He had to wait an hour before a lot of books were first disposed of. Then the safes were put up, and the smaller one, taken from Mr. Hopkins' private room, Bob bid on and got dead cheap.

He also bought in his late employer's roll-top desk for \$12, about a third of what it was worth. He captured the revolving chair, too, and three other chairs. There were only a few minor things more, including the old broker's rug, that he

wanted, and he got them for a song. After paying his bill he hired an expressman to carry them around to his office and put them in. Then he arranged to have a ticker put in. Next morning he brought down an oil painting of his late boss, and some other pictures he had saved from the old broker's personal property at his apartment. These he hung up. All he needed now was some printing, books and stationery, which he ordered from a Broad Street establishment.

Having nothing further to do, he went to the gallery of the Exchange and remained there till he felt hungry, when he went to lunch. The rent and furnishing of his office had cost him about \$650, but for seven months he would have very little expense to meet. The actual rent of the room was fully twice as much as he had paid, both the assignee and Mr. Rider standing a part of it. Bob hoped to be so well fixed by the first of May as to be able to meet the full rent easily, or even to get a better office. Next day he brought the tin box full of stock certificates downtown and locked them up in the safe. That morning he received his long over-due answer from the secretary of the Eldorado Banana Corporation, enclosing a copy of an encouraging letter from the manager in charge of the plantation.

He was informed that the promised dividend had been passed and the money applied to improving the plantation so as to make the second year's crop a record one. The secretary further said that in accordance with his request the 40,000 shares had been transferred to his name on the company's books, and the gentleman added that if he wished to dispose of any of the stock a customer could readily be found for it at 25 cents a share. His 40,000 shares, therefore, might be considered to have a cash value of \$10,000, obtainable at any time, which was mighty good news to Bob, who had not expected to be able to sell it for \$500. In conclusion, the secretary advised him not to sell, as in a year he said his stock ought to be worth double its present market value.

"My legacy is panning out pretty well, after all," mused Bob when he had read the letter. "Maybe in time some of the other stock will turn up trumps, too."

After reading the news of the district in the two Wall Street dailies he had subscribed for, he put on his hat, locked up and went around to call on his friend Dick Smart, whom he hadn't seen for over a week. Dick was just going out on an errand and Bob met him in the corridor.

"Hello, old man, where have you been keeping yourself since I saw you last?" asked Dick. "I got your note saying that your job was up and that the office furniture and fixings were to be sold out in a day or two."

"I've been busy fixing up an office for myself," replied Bob.

"Then you've taken an office all by yourself?"

"Surest thing you know."

"Where is it?"

"I rented the small room of the suite that Mr. Hopkins used."

"You mean the room he used for his private office?"

"Yes."

"You must be paying a swell rent for it."

"I've got it till the first of next May at a fifty per cent. reduction."

"Then you got a bargain."

"I know it. I didn't intend to take an office just for myself, but this was a chance that I couldn't let get by me. Come up and see me this afternoon. I'll wait for you."

"All right, I will. I'll be on hand about half-past three."

After lunch Bob wrote a note to Edna in which he told her he had taken for an office the private room of the old broker, and he invited her to call in and see him that afternoon before she went home, saying he would wait for her. He sent the note by an A. D. T. messenger to her at the money-lender's office. He spent the rest of the afternoon till three o'clock at the Exchange, after which he returned to his office to wait for Dick to turn up.

CHAPTER IX.—Bob Declines An Enticing Offer for His Copper Stock.

"Say, this is all right," exclaimed Dick, when he walked into the office at the time he had promised to be there. "You've got a fine little den here. But what do you mean by that sign 'Stocks and Bonds' on the door? You haven't the nerve to call yourself a broker, have you?"

"Oh, that's only a bluff," laughed Bob.

"Trying to put on style, eh?"

"I might as well make a showing while I'm about it. While I'm waiting for a chance to pull off a deal a countryman might come in and ask me to buy him some stock, and I could rake in a commission. Everything is fish that comes to my net."

"You must have quite a little bunch of money to take the chances of making a living on the plan you've marked out."

"I've less than \$4,000 cash; but I own a block of stock in a banana corporation that is valued at \$10,000."

"A banana corporation!" cried Dick. "What's that?"

"Oh, a company formed for raising bananas in Honduras and selling them in this country. There's a big profit in the business. I've got 40,000 shares in it."

"Where in thunder did you get them?"

"The late Mr. Hopkins made me a present of the stock."

"And you say it's worth \$10,000?"

"So the secretary of the company has just informed me by letter."

"Your boss was uncommonly liberal to you, for I think you told me that he left you all his personal effects, too, in his apartments."

"He did."

"That's the kind of boss to have. It's a wonder he didn't adopt you."

"He might have done worse," chuckled Bob.

"If I'd been in his shoes I'd sooner have adopted a girl."

"I've no doubt you'd do some such fool trick if you were old and lonesome. You hear of such things being done every day by weak-minded chaps with one foot in the grave. There's no fool like an old one, but Mr. Hopkins wasn't such a chump. There is his portrait over my desk, as he looked when I first came to work for him. I shall always keep that out of respect for him, and as an evidence of the grateful appreciation I feel toward him for making me his heir."

"You're a lucky boy—to be an old broker's heir. Too bad he didn't leave you a bank account, too."

"He left me all he had to leave, and I'm just as grateful to him as if he left me a million."

"You say the banana company stock is worth \$10,000?"

"Yes."

"Going to realize on it?"

"Not at present. It will be handy to fall back on in case I get cleaned out in some deal."

"That's right. I wish some old broker would take a fancy to me and make me his heir."

"I know you do; but that thing isn't happening every day."

"You must have been born lucky."

"Maybe so and maybe not. I'm not dead yet."

"No, you look pretty healthy. I suppose you haven't done anything in the market yet?"

"I'm not rushing things. It's a good plan to go slow and keep your eyes on the lookout. I can't afford to take too many chances, for my capital is limited."

"If you made money out of stocks as a messenger, you ought to do better now you are your own boss."

"I hope so. I will at any rate be able to follow a transaction up close, and keep in touch with it all the time. That will make a whole lot of difference, especially when prices are fluctuating."

"You bet it will. In case a slump sets in you'll be right on the spot to take care of your investment, and that will give you a chance to save yourself."

Bob nodded.

"It's a fine thing to be boss of your own time," continued Dick. "You can get down in the morning when you choose, and leave when you feel like it. I wish I had such a snap."

"By the way, I think you promised to be my first customer when I went into business for myself," said Bob.

"I did; but you're not in the brokerage business yet."

"There is no saying when I'll do something in that line. Somebody may come along at any moment and give me a commission, so if you want to be my first customer you'll have to get a move on."

"I haven't any deal in sight. Besides, you haven't money enough to carry anything on margin for me or anybody else."

"Not in the high priced stocks, I'll admit, but if a customer wants something in the Curb line I guess I could handle it if the order wasn't too big. In that case, I'd get some broker to help me out."

At that juncture there came a gentle knock on the door. Bob sprang up and opened it. Edna stood outside, looking sweeter than usual, Bob thought.

"Come right in and sit down, Edna," cried Bob, shaking hands with her. "There's nobody here but my friend Dick Smart, and you know him."

Dick got up and bowed to the fair stenographer.

"Glad to see you, Miss Prescott," he said. "Take this seat next to the desk. Bob has a fine little office, don't you think?"

"Yes, and it's quite a surprise to me. With that sign on the door one would take you for a regular broker, Bob," she said laughingly.

"Nothing like making an early start in life, Edna," replied Bob. "If I can do anything in

the brokerage line I'm going to be Johnny on the spot."

"He's just told me that he doesn't intend to let anything get away from him that spells money, even if it's only a damaged nickel," put in Dick.

"That's business, isn't it, Edna?" said Bob.

"Of course. Do you really think you'll be able to do any business here?"

"If I didn't think so I wouldn't go to the expense of renting and fitting up this office. I expect to make my living out of it and add to my working capital besides."

"You have my best wishes for your success. I see you have a painting of Mr. Hopkins over your desk. Where did you get it?"

"The old broker left it to me with a lot of other things. In fact, he left me everything he possessed that was not coming to his creditors."

"I remember now that you received a letter through the mail on the morning that we received the news of Mr. Hopkins' death. It contained a letter from him written a short time before he died, and also a paper with a notary's seal on it which conveyed all of his personal property in his rooms to you. You showed them to me, and I was surprised to see that the old gentleman had thought of much of you."

"He and I always got on fine together. We never had a run-in about anything from the day I went to work for him till the day he died. I wouldn't ask for a better boss. I don't believe a better one could be made to order," said Bob emphatically.

Fifteen minutes later the three young people were walking up Nassau Street together, enroute for the entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge where Edna connected with a trolley car for her home. Bob got to his office next morning around nine, and the first thing he did was to look over the previous day's market report. Then he picked up the "Wall Street News" and proceeded to learn the latest intelligence about matters and things in the financial district. It wanted five minutes of ten and he was thinking of going over to the Exchange, when he heard a knock on the door.

"Come in," said Bob.

A small, dapper dressed man, with jet black eyes and a shrewd cast of countenance walked in.

"Is Robert Brown in?" inquired the visitor.

"He is. That's my name," answered Bob. "Help yourself to a chair and let me know what I can do for you."

"You called at my office a couple of weeks ago about some Excelsior Copper mining stock you had for sale," began the caller.

"Oh, you are Mr. Isaac Blum, of Grand Street?"

"Yes."

"I have 15,000 shares of the stock and I wanted to find out what it was worth. The shares were originally purchased by the late Mr. John Hopkins, stockbroker, and I got the certificate from him."

"They have no regular market value, and so far have fetched whatever a customer was willing to pay for them. I've had none in the office for about four months, nor have I had any inquiry for the stock till yesterday. The party in question wants just 15,000 shares and will give five cents a share for them. I advise you to take it, for you may not get another chance to sell your shares for six months."

"I'll think the matter over, Mr. Blum, and let you know in an hour or two," replied Bob, who, without being able to say why, was a bit suspicious of Mr. Blum's offer.

"An hour or two may be too late, as I expect the man may be at my office when I get back," said Blum energetically. "Better make up your mind now to accept the offer, which is a good one for the stock."

"No, I won't accept five cents. Seems to me it ought to be worth more than that. At that rate, my certificate would only bring \$750, and from that sum I'd have to pay you a commission of one-half a cent a share, or \$75, which would leave me only \$675."

"I'll throw off the commission, as I'll get \$75 from the other party," said Blum, in his quick, snappy way.

Bob, however, declined to sell, and his visitor looked disappointed.

"May I use your 'phone?" he said.

"Certainly," replied Bob.

Blum called his office up and asked if Mr. Beaseley was there. Presumably Mr. Beaseley was, or else Blum held a conversation with an imaginary party or his clerk at the other end. Finally he turned to Bob and said his customer was willing to give six cents a share for the stock. This rise in price made the boy less inclined than ever to part with his shares. He began to suspect that there was a colored gemman in the woodpile, so he declined to sell for six cents.

"You're foolish, young man," said Blum. "That stock hasn't sold as high as six cents for a year to my knowledge, and it may be another year before you get as good an offer again. A thousand dollars is not to be despised."

"At six cents a share my stock represents only \$900," replied Bob.

"I guess my customer will give the odd hundred," said Blum, resuming his talk over the wire. "Yes, he'll make it \$1,000, and I won't charge you any commission. What do you say?"

"I think I won't sell," replied Bob. "I don't need the money."

Blum tried hard to get him to reconsider his determination, and when he wouldn't, he got up and left the office.

CHAPTER X.—Bob Picks Up Another Tip.

As soon as Mr. Blum had gone, Bob put on his hat and went out. He directed his steps to the office of a well-known Curb broker with whom he was acquainted. The trader happened to be in, and Bob was shown into his private room.

"Mr. Judd, you remember I was speaking to you some time ago about Excelsior Copper stock," said Bob. "I told you I had 15,000 shares, and I wanted to know what it was worth. You referred me to Isaac Blum, manager of a mining bureau on Grand Street, as being the person best qualified to give me information about an unlisted stock like Excelsior Copper, which you said was in no demand on the Curb."

The broker nodded, and then said:

"Have you got the stock yet?"

"I have. I didn't see Mr. Blum at the time, as he was out West. His clerk told me that he didn't think it was worth much. At any rate, he said I'd have some trouble in finding anybody to

take my shares off my hands. Half an hour ago Blum called at my office and offered me \$1,000, on behalf of a customer, for the shares. Now if it's worth \$1,000 to Mr. Blum's customer, it ought to be worth that to me. Do you think I was foolish in turning down his offer?"

"No. There have been developments in Excelsior Copper during the last few days that warrant the belief that the mine is likely to be listed on the exchanges soon. If you want to sell your shares I can get you ten cents for it, or \$1,500 for the block. I know several brokers who offered that for it yesterday."

"Thank you for the information, Mr. Judd. I guess I won't sell. It may pay me to hold on. I have a suspicion that Mr. Blum wanted that stock for himself and not for a customer, and he called on me thinking that probably I would be glad to get rid of it at his figure," said Bob.

"It's business to buy what you want as cheap as you can get it," smiled the broker, "so you can't blame Mr. Blum."

"Yes, I suppose it is," replied Bob, rising and bidding him good-day.

"Blum thought I'd prove an easy mark," chuckled the boy, "but he found out he was wrong in his calculations."

While Bob was waiting for the elevator, he noticed an envelope lying on the corridor floor. He picked it up and saw that it was addressed to somebody in lead pencil. The envelope had been stepped on, however, and the name rendered undistinguishable. It was sealed, so Bob opened it to see if the man's name was on the inside. This is what he saw scribbled in pencil:

"Dear George—Buy C. & D. and go the limit. I've just learned, on the best of authority, that it is being cornered by a big syndicate. That means it will be boomed in a few days, and you will stand to win anywhere from fifteen to twenty dollars a share, perhaps more. It is going now at 72. Don't lost any time, as it is likely to rise any moment, and you might as well get all the cream while you're about it. I'm loaded up to the neck, and wish I had the boodle to go in deeper. Yours,
AL.

"Sept. 28."

At that moment the cage came down and Bob, thrusting the envelope in his pocket, boarded it and was presently in the street. Instead of returning to his office he went over to the gallery of the Stock Exchange and hunted out the C. & D. pole. He saw a well-known broker named Quinn standing there making offers for the stock. To make certain the trader was really taking in C. & D., he went downstairs and made inquiries of a broker he knew. He learned that Mr. Quinn was buying C. & D. whenever it was offered, having apparently a large order to fill. That satisfied Bob that the broker was acting for the syndicate mentioned in the note, and he felt sure that the tip sent by "Al" to "George," and which had accidentally fallen into his hands, was a good one.

So he went to his safe deposit box, took out \$3,000, and going to the little bank on Nassau Street, put it up as security on 300 shares of C. & D. at the market price, which was 73 at that time. He then went back to the Exchange and kept his eye on the broker who was buying in C.

& D. Many traders had noticed Quinn's persistent efforts to gather in the stock, and some of them had followed suit in anticipation of a rise. The big broker, however, stopped buying as soon as the price jumped up a couple of points, and left the floor. The other traders hastened to sell at the slight advance and succeeded in getting out at a profit, and then the price dropped back around 73 again. Bob, seeing that operations in C. & D. had come to a standstill, went to lunch. On returning to the Exchange he found the big broker back again buying as persistently as ever. The price went up by degrees to 74, and then the young speculator left the gallery and went to his office. Hardly had he entered before there was a knock at his door.

"Come in," cried Bob.

"I would like to see Mr. Brown," said a tall, angular man, entering.

"Well, you're looking at him. My name is Brown."

"You are a broker?"

"I buy and sell stocks and bonds on commission."

"I want to get a few thousand shares of Excelsior Copper. Could you get them for me?"

"That depends on what you're willing to pay for the stock. Ten cents has been offered on the Curb for it, but I doubt if any can be got for that price."

"I'll give fifteen for as many shares as you can find," said the visitor.

"What's your name?"

"William Foster."

"Well, Mr. Foster, if you will leave me a deposit of \$1,000, I'll see what I can do for you."

"All right, young man, here is the money," and the visitor counted out the amount in bills. "When shall I call?"

"Come back at half-past three and I will let you know what success I've had."

"I'll be here," replied Mr. Foster.

Bob drew up the order authorizing him to buy as much Excelsior as he could get for any figure not exceedingly fifteen cents, and handed it to the caller to sign. Mr. Foster affixed his signature and went away. Bob locked the \$1,000 in his safe and then went out to see if he could get any of the shares. He went down Broad Street to where the Curb brokers were doing business and proceeded to bid on Excelsior Copper.

"I'll give twelve cents for any part of 5,000 shares of Excelsior Copper," he shouted.

He was immediately surrounded by a bunch of traders who began giving him the laugh.

"Where have you been, young Rip Van Winkle?" said one of them jocosely.

"What do you want—the earth for nothing?" asked another.

"Who do you represent?" asked a third. "Better raise that bid of yours."

Bob continued to offer twelve cents, and was hustled all about to ring, but nobody offered to sell him any Excelsior Copper. Finally he raised his price by degrees to fifteen cents, but with no better results, though he had his hat jammed over his eyes, and all sorts of funny tricks pulled off on him. At length he gave up, and after some trouble, extracted himself from the mob. Then it suddenly occurred to him that not being a member of the Exchange he couldn't do any business in the ring. So he walked up to a broker he knew

by sight, handed him his card and asked him if he would try and get him some Excelsior Copper.

"There is very little of it on the market," was the reply, "and that little won't come out under twenty cents, I guess. Eighteen has been offered with no takers. How high are you willing to go?"

"I am only authorized to give fifteen," replied Jack.

"Then there is no use of me taking your order. There has been an unexpected boom in that stock, which isn't a listed mine, and everybody seems to be after it. News has been going around of a big discovery of copper in the mine, and that is the cause of the sudden demand. It is likely to be up to twenty-five cents tomorrow."

Bob, feeling he was out of it, returned to his office and waited for his customer to show up. He appeared promptly on time, and Bob told him that if he wanted Excelsior Copper he'd have to pay anywhere from twenty cents up for it.

"I'll give twenty cents for any part of 15,000 shares," he replied.

"I've got that number of shares in my safe, but I won't sell it under twenty-five cents."

"I'll give you twenty-two cents," said Foster.

"No, sir; twenty-five is the lowest I'll sell for."

The visitor raised his offer to twenty-three, but Bob wouldn't have it. Finally he agreed to pay twenty-five and a commission of \$75. He pulled out a roll and handed Bob \$2,825, which, with his \$1,000 deposit, made up the full price. Book took the certificate out of his safe and turned it over to him, and then Mr. Foster, with a look of satisfaction, left the office.

"I guess that stock will be worth more than twenty-five cents in a few days, or Mr. Foster wouldn't have been so eager to buy it," thought Bob, "but I don't care. I can use that money to better advantage in C. & D. Only for that, I'd having hung onto the copper shares. Mr. Hopkins' legacy seems to be panning out better and better as times goes by. The banana corporation promises to turn out a first-class trump and the Phoenix Optical Co. looks good for the future. Now, if the Sunrise mine would only boom, too, I'd feel pretty good. As for the other certificates, I guess there's not much to be expected of them."

Bob locked up, went over to the little bank, and managed to get into the brokerage department just a minute before it closed. He left a second order for C. & D., this time for 400 shares. As the price had gone up to 75, this deal would cost him \$2 a share more than his first one. However, that fact didn't worry him, as he felt C. & D. was a good thing, and he went home feeling perfectly satisfied with things as they stood.

CHAPTER XI.—Bob Provides for Edna.

Next morning, he called on Dick and tipped him off on C. & D. Some time during the day his friend bought 80 shares at 76. Two days afterward the stock was up to 80. On getting back to his office from lunch that day, he found Edna in the corridor waiting for him.

"Hello, Edna, how are things coming on at your office?"

"I've left Mr. Wessel," she replied, following him into his office.

"How is that? Did he break out again?"

"He had the nerve to make love to me just before I was going out to lunch," she answered, with a flushed face and a voice full of indignation.

"He did, eh?"

"Yes, he did. Wanted me to marry him. What do you think of that?"

"I think he has forgotten what a back number he is."

"The idea of a man of his years asking a girl of my age to marry him!"

"It isn't the first time that December has courted May," laughed Bob.

"I'm sure I don't see anything for you to laugh at," she pouted.

"It's funny to me, if it isn't to you. So you didn't like it and threw up your position?"

"I wouldn't work another hour for the old—well, I won't say what I was going to. I can't understand how some men can make themselves so ridiculous."

"I see you're not a mercenary young lady. Some girls would have jumped at the chance you turned down. I've heard brokers say that Wessel is worth a quarter of a million. He can't live many more years, so that any girl willing to put up with him a while would come into a nice fat wad."

"I wouldn't marry him if he was covered with diamonds," cried Edna angrily.

"Well, don't get mad over it. You don't have to marry him. There are others—myself, for instance."

"You!" she cried, laughing and blushing.

"Yes. I'm not such a bad proposition. I expect to be worth as much as Wessel before I die. Better catch on before some other girl cuts you out."

"Don't be ridiculous, Bob!" Edna said, blushing again.

"Would you object to becoming Mrs. Bob Brown?"

"Bob, will you stop being foolish?"

"Certainly. Anything to oblige; but I warn you I've decided to make you Mrs. Brown some day, so you'd better not try to get away from me. In fact, in order to keep a hold on you, I'm going to offer you a job at the same wages Wessel gave you."

"What have you got for me to do?" asked Edna, with some interest.

"Nothing much. I want somebody to stay in the office while I am out, and see any visitor who may do me the honor to call. It will be a snap for you."

"Can you afford to pay \$12 a week for such a small service as that?"

"To you, yes. I expect to make a good haul out of the market in a few days, and then I won't miss \$12 per. At any rate, I'd like to have you here, Edna. I can get you some outside work to do to keep you busy a part of the time. Mr. Rider, in the next room, is looking for a stenographer who will come in, take dictation and do the type-writing on the outside. He has been employing a public stenographer, but she isn't satisfactory to him because she doesn't deliver his work on time. You ought to be able to fill the bill. I'll rent a machine for you, and you will have my office to yourself most of the time."

"I like the idea, Bob, very much. My services

won't cost you \$12 then. Whatever Mr. Rider pays me you can deduct from my wages."

"All right. Have it any way you want. Come with me now and I'll introduce you to the gentleman."

Bob took Edna next door and introduced her to Mr. Rider. Then he submitted his proposition with reference to the girl's services. The gentleman came to an arrangement with Edna at once, and it was settled that she was to take dictation from him twice a day, and typewrite her notes in Bob's office. For this service he agreed to pay her from six to seven-fifty a week. Bob thought the pay satisfactory as Mr. Rider's work was not very heavy, and he was very willing to make up the difference in order to have Edna with him. Edna was also pleased to be with Bob, so she said she would call on Mr. Rider ready for business next morning. After Edna went home, Bob visited the headquarters of a well-known typewriter company and rented a machine for the young stenographer's use. He arranged to have it delivered that afternoon, and went back to his office to wait for it. Dick came in after he got off and they talked over the prospects of C. & D. As soon as the machine arrived Bob locked up for the day and the boys went off together. Next morning Edna appeared about quarter past nine, looking as fresh as a daisy.

"Good morning, Edna," said Bob. "There is your machine on that table all ready for you to go to work on."

"Thank you, Bob, you are very kind to do so much for me," she answered.

"Don't mention it. You know I'd do anything for you."

She blushed and looked down at the rug.

"You are certainly a good friend to me," she said.

"Well, you're a good friend of mine, too, aren't you?"

"I mean to be. I am very grateful to you for taking me in here and providing me with something to do."

"Oh, pshaw! I don't use the office much. There is plenty of room for you, and I'm glad to have you here, not only as company, but to look after the place when I'm out. I've already had one customer, and I'm likely to have more. It's business-like, anyway, to have a stenographer on the premises. Don't you think so?"

"Yes. I'll be glad to do anything I can to help you, Bob."

"Of course, I know that. We're old friends, in a way, and I guess we'll get on well together. At any rate, I think a whole lot of you, Edna, and I hope you return the feeling. I'm out on the world alone, without parents or even relatives, and it is pleasant to have someone in whom I can confide and talk to with the fullest confidence. I should be glad to take you around and give you a good time if you care to have me do so. I want you to feel that you're just as safe with me as if I were your brother. Have you that much confidence in me?"

"Yes, Bob, I have the fullest confidence in you, and I appreciate the interest you take in me."

Their conversation was interrupted by a knock on the door, and Mr. Rider walked in.

"If you are ready to take some dictation, Miss Prescott, I'll be glad to have you come into my office with your notebook," he said.

Edna declared she was all ready, and followed him in next door. When she got back, Bob put on his hat and went over to the Exchange where he found that the brokers were beginning to take a great deal of interest in C. & D. It had opened at 80 1-8 and was now up to 81. When Bob left to go to lunch it was ruling at 82. On his way back to the office he ran across Mason Hopwood, who appeared to be taking the world easy. He was smoking a good cigar and didn't seem to care whether school kept or not.

"Hello, Brown, who are you working for?" he asked in a patronizing way.

"Myself," replied Bob.

"Yourself!" replied Hopwood in surprise. "What are you doing?"

"Broker and speculator."

"What! You a broker and speculator!" cried Hopwood, with an incredulous laugh. "Say, what are you giving me?"

"An answer to your question."

"You don't expect me to believe such tommyrot, do you?"

"You don't have to, but it's a fact just the same. I'm occupying the small room formerly used by Mr. Hopkins as his private office."

Hopwood looked astonished.

"Where did you get your capital?"

"That question is rather too personal, so you'll have to excuse me answering it."

"Do you expect to make a living as a broker and speculator?"

"I certainly do."

"What do you know about the business and methods of either? Why, you've only been a messenger boy."

"I'm not worrying about the details. If I don't get along it will be my own funeral and no one else's."

"I'll come around and officiate as one of the mourners as soon as you go up the spout," grinned Hopwood.

"You're very kind to volunteer your valuable services, Mr. Hopwood, but I hope there will be no necessity to call on you."

"So you've rented one of Hopkins' rooms, eh? You've got a pretty good nerve, I must say. I thought they didn't rent offices to irresponsible boys."

"I don't consider myself irresponsible. At any rate, I've paid the rent up to the first of May, so I'm under compliment to nobody."

"How much did you pay?"

"That's another question I decline to answer."

"I guess you're coddling me, anyway."

"You're at liberty to think so. But I'll have to leave you. My stenographer will want to go to lunch, so I'll have to get on."

"Your stenographer! That's pretty good. Got a cashier, too?"

"Not yet."

"When you want one let me know. If you pay enough, maybe I'll come around and work for you," chuckled Hopwood, as if he thought he had said something funny.

"Thank you for the offer. I'll keep you in mind," and Bob walked off.

Hopwood looked after him with a sneer.

"I guess he was giving me a stand-up. It's too absurd to think that a boy like him could hire an office in an expensive Wall Street building. I couldn't afford such a luxury myself, and I'm a

man with a small boodle. I think I'll drop up at the Caxton Building and see if he really has an office. I guess he's working as messenger for somebody who has hired the old broker's suite. I'll go up there and just see what he is doing, anyway."

Thus speaking, Hopwood crossed the street and entered a cafe where he ordered and drank a milk punch with evident relish.

CHAPTER XII.—How Bob Won Again.

While Edna was at lunch, Bob sat by the ticker and read off the quotations, especially those relating to C. & D. A good deal of business was being done in the stock, and it rose steadily an eighth of a point at a time. When Edna got back it had reached 84.

"Let me see," said Bob, drawing a pad toward him and doing some figuring. "I am \$11 a share ahead on my 300 shares and \$9 a share to the good on the 400. That is a total of nearly \$7,000. Lord, that's mighty good, and the boom hasn't more than got under way. Seems to me I ought to double that profit."

He spoke aloud for Edna's benefit, and she looked surprised.

"Are you really making so much as that?" she asked him.

"That's the way things stand just now. If nothing happens to land me in the soup, I ought to make a good thing out of this double deal of mine," he replied.

"I'm awfully glad that you're doing so well, Bob," she said, in a tone that showed she meant what she said.

"I'm glad myself. It feels good to make money in chunks."

"You are certainly a smart boy."

"I'm doing the best I know how. If I'm smart, so much the better. You've got to be smart to hold your own in Wall Street. Even then, you are liable to be dumped at any moment when you aren't looking for such a thing to happen."

Bob reached for his hat intending to go over to the Exchange, when the door opened without a preliminary knock, and Hopwood stood on the threshold. He had been studying Bob's sign on the ground glass of the door for a full minute in no little astonishment.

He was still more astonished when he saw Edna Prescott in the office working away at her typewriter just as she used to do for Mr. Hopkins. Indeed, he was so taken aback that he couldn't open his mouth even to greet the girl on whom he was quite gone.

"So you came to see if I really had an office, eh, Hopwood?" laughed Bob.

"I didn't believe you had one, but I see you have," replied the ex-clerk. "How do you do, Miss Prescott?"

Edna bowed in a distant way.

"Have you left Mr. Wessel?"

"Yes, she left him all right. The trouble with Wessel seems to be that he wants a wife more than he does a stenographer," said Bob, answering for the girl.

"Are you doing outside work now, Miss Prescott?" asked Hopwood.

"I'm employed by Mr. Brown."

"What, Bob Brown?"

"Yes."

"Are you satisfied now that I have a stenographer, Mr. Hopwood?" asked Bob, enjoying the visitor's bewilderment.

"Say, who's backing you in this thing?" said Hopwood, feeling sure that Bob was acting merely as a blind for somebody else.

"I'm backing myself. I'm not one of those fortunate people who find an angel to foot their bills."

As the boy spoke, he picked up the tape and looked at it. It recorded a transaction in C. & D.

"Well, Mr. Hopwood, I'm going over to the Exchange. Are you going in that direction?"

"No; I will remain and keep Miss Prescott company."

"Miss Prescott is too busy to entertain visitors," replied Bob.

"I'm only going to stay a minute," said Hopwood, showing no disposition to move.

As Bob couldn't very well put the young man out, and he wouldn't take the hint, he nodded to him and left himself. Bob spent an hour and a half at the Exchange, during which time C. & D. went to 90, and then he returned to his office. Edna had finished all she had to do for the day and was reading a book to pass the time.

"How long did our friend Hopwood stay?" Bob inquired.

"Till I had to ask him to go. He annoyed me a great deal. Now that he knows where to find me, I'm afraid he'll come here again."

"We'll have to freeze him out, then, if he hasn't sense enough to see that his presence is not agreeable to you. He ought to know enough to stay away during business hours, anyway. It's a wonder he wouldn't employ his time looking up a job for himself. I've an idea that work doesn't agree with him. While the assignee was in charge of Mr. Hopkins' affairs he did as little work as he could help. I guess I attended to half of what he ought to have done. He ought to belong to the aristocracy or wealthy leisure class. That would suit him from the ground up."

Bob told Edna that C. & D. had closed at 90.

"I am \$4,000 richer on paper than I was when you returned from your lunch," he added. "Tomorrow I shall probably think about cashing in."

"You are very fortunate," she answered.

"Well, you see, I'm operating on a tip that has all the earmarks of a winner."

At that point Dick walked in feeling as gay as a lark over the rise of C. & D.

"I'm over a thousand dollars ahead on my deal," he said. "Do you think the price will go to par?"

"There is no telling," replied Bob. "I'm going to chance it going to 95. If it does, I shall sell."

"I'll give you an order to sell my shares at the same time," said Dick.

"All right. Sit at the desk and write it out. It will be no trouble for me to put your order in with my own."

Dick wrote the order and Bob put it in his pocket.

"I guess I'll close up shop for to-day," said

Bob. "You can put on your hat, Edna, and go home. Dick, you and I will see Miss Prescott to Brooklyn Bridge."

Next day C. & D. went to 95 about noon and Bob sold out his two batches of shares, and put in Dick's order, too. When the boys got their statements and checks, Bob found that he had cleared \$14,425 and Dick about \$1,500. Showing his statement to Edna, Bob told her that he was now worth \$22,000.

"I'm getting on, ain't I?" he said.

"You certainly are."

"I started in business with \$4,500 less than three weeks ago. I spent \$650 for rent and furnishings, worth \$1,500. I received \$3,825 for some copper shares that Mr. Hopkins presented me with, and the rest I made out of C. & D. I also have 40,000 shares of stock in a company that is engaged in raising bananas in Honduras for export to this country, and I can get \$10,000 for it any time I want. That makes me worth \$32,000. I have a lot of other stock, too, that may turn me in a profit some day, so you see I'm not so badly off for a boy going on nineteen."

Next day soon after Bob went out, Hopwood came into the office again, with a boutonniere in his lapel and otherwise spruced up, and proceeded to make himself agreeable to Edna.

"Mr. Hopwood, I am very busy, and I wish you would not stay here talking an distracting my attention from my work," she said, in a decided tone.

"I beg your pardon," said the ex-clerk, rising, "I wasn't aware that my presence interfered with your duties. I will call some other time."

"I don't see any reason why you should call unless you have business with Mr. Brown."

"Why do you call that boy Mr. Brown?" said Hopwood, with a look of disgust. "It is really too ridiculous."

"Because he is my employer."

"Does he really pay you your wages?"

"He does. I get the same money from him I got from Mr. Wessel."

"Seems to me there is some mystery in this matter. It is absurd to think that Bob Brown is running this office on his own responsibility. He was only a messenger boy up to a few weeks ago. What does he know about business in Wall Street? Really, it makes me laugh."

"Mr. Hopwood, must I ask you again to go?" said Edna, impatiently.

"I'm going; but it's a shame for you to drive me away in this abrupt manner. Really, I hate to tear myself away from your charming presence. You don't know how much I admire you, Miss Prescott."

"Mr. Hopwood, your conversation is not agreeable to me. I wish you would go."

"Certainly. Good-by. I'll call again."

Hopwood held out his hand, but Edna refused to accept it, and so he bowed himself out, much to her relief. Twenty minutes later a messenger boy appeared with a bouquet and a box of candy addressed to Edna Prescott, with Hopwood's compliments.

"Take them back," Edna exclaimed, angrily.

"Won't you sign for them?" asked the boy.

"No, I won't. I don't want them and won't accept them. Take them right back."

"All right, miss. It ain't nothin' to me," and

the messenger carried them back to the A. D. T. office where he was employed.

Edna was angry clear through at what she considered Hopwood's presumption, and her eyes snapped when she told Bob about the matter.

"I don't want him in here any more unless he calls on business connected with the office," she said.

"He is not likely to have any business with me," replied Bob. "When I see him I'll tell him not to call on you any more."

"I wish you would."

Bob saw Hopwood next day on Broad Street and told him that as Miss Prescott could not be bothered with visitors during business hours, he wished he'd kindly refrain from calling at the office any more.

"You put on a lot of airs for an ex-messenger boy," sneered Hopwood.

"You put on a lot of style yourself for a person who is loafing around the streets when you ought to be at work."

"How dare you talk to me in that way?" roared the ex-clerk.

"If you didn't deserve it I wouldn't talk to you that way."

"I've a great mind to kick you into the street for your impudence."

"I wouldn't advise you to try it, Mr. Hopwood. You might find yourself in the street before you knew what had happened to you."

"You young loafer, take that."

Hopwood aimed a blow at Bob's face. The young speculator was on his guard and dodged the ex-clerk's fist. Not wishing to have any trouble with Hopwood on the street, he started to walk away.

The ex-clerk took that as a sign that he had intimidated Bob, and he stepped forward and slapped the boy in the face. Bob turned as quick as a flash and slugged Hopwood in the jaw, sending him reeling into the gutter. Then he walked away and went up into the gallery of the Exchange.

CHAPTER XIII.—The Express Box.

It was about this time that Bob noticed an item in one of the Wall Street papers about the Sunrise Mining and Milling Co., of Paradise, Nevada. The management of the company had been changed, and work was to be resumed on the mine again. This news had caused the price of the stock to advance on the Goldfield Exchange to six cents a share.

"That makes my 10,000 shares work \$600 in a general way. Probably I could sell them in Goldfield if I wanted to at \$550, but it isn't likely I could get that here for them," he thought. "However, I am not anxious to get rid of the stock. It may in time go up to a quarter or fifty cents a share; who knows?"

Bob cut the item out and put it in one of his desk drawers, and then began studying the previous day's market report. C. & D. had petered out as a boom, and was down in the seventies again, but its fall had been taken as a matter of course and there had been no panic.

The market was not affected adversely as a whole, and trading was generally good. Bob was on the lookout for some other stock that

promised results, as he was not happy unless he had his money at work. He was reading the paper and Edna was working at her typewriter when in came Mr. Isaac Blum of Grand Street.

"How do you do, Mr. Blum?" said Bob. "Take a seat."

"How do you do, young man? I have been informed that you own a considerable amount of stock in the Eldorado Banana Corporation, of New Orleans."

"You have been correctly informed."

"Do you want to sell any of it?"

"I am not particularly anxious to do so."

"I have a customer who would like to get 10,000 shares."

"I'm afraid you'll have to look elsewhere for the stock."

"But I understand that you have 40,000 shares?"

"I have that number."

"Then why not sell him 10,000?"

"How much will he give for the stock?"

"How much do you want for it?"

"I prefer to let him make a bid."

"I am authorized to offer 25 cents."

"No," replied Bob, shaking his head. "I would not think of selling for that. I have been advised by the company that the shares will be worth twice as much as that shortly. I don't care much to sell; but still, I will sell 10,000 shares for 50 cents. If he will send me a certified check for \$5,000 he can have the stock."

"Well, I have no authority to offer more than 25 cents," replied Blum, rising. "I will tell my customer what you said. If he wants to give 50 cents well and good. That is your lowest price, is it?"

"That is my lowest."

"Very well. Good-day," and Blum walked out.

An hour later Bob's telephone rang. Edna answered it, for Bob was out.

"What is it?" she said.

"Is this Brown, broker?"

"Yes; but Mr. Brown is not in at present."

There was a pause and Edna heard the person talking to somebody near him.

"Hello. I am Mr. Blum, of Grand Street. Tell Mr. Brown that my customer will take 10,000 Eldorado Banana Corporation stock at 50 cents. I will send my clerk down at three o'clock with a certified check for \$5,000 to fix the matter up."

"Very well, I will tell him when he comes in."

Edna hung up the receiver and returned to her work. Bob didn't get back till after three, but Blum's clerk hadn't yet arrived. Edna had hardly finished telling him about the telephone message when the clerk made his appearance.

"I can't deliver the stock to you, as it's all in one certificate. I'll show you," said Bob, going to his safe, and bringing out the document. "I'll mail this certificate to the secretary, and have it changed to four 10,000 share certificates, one of them made out in the name of your customer. Tell Mr. Blum to hold the check in his safe until I am able to deliver the certificate, but as a guarantee of good faith on the part of his customer, I shall have to have a deposit of \$500 on account, which sum will be returned with the certificate."

"All right," replied the clerk, who then left.

Hardly had he gone before a broker with whom Bob was acquainted came in to pay him a friendly call, and see his office. While they were talking the door opened and an American Expressman entered with a small wooden box addressed to Bob. He placed it on the center table and opened his book for Bob to sign.

"Who is this from?" asked the young speculator, looking at the box.

The man looked at the column in which the name of the sender appeared and pointed it out to Bob.

"John Owens, eh? I don't know any such person," said the young speculator.

"Your name is Robert Brown, isn't it?" replied the man.

"There's no doubt about the fact."

"Then the box is correctly addressed. The charges are paid. All you have to do is to receipt for it."

"All right," and Bob signed the book.

As the expressman went out, Dick Smart came in. Edna having finished her work for the day, began putting on her hat preparatory to going home.

"Hello! What have you got here, Bob?" said Dick, looking at the box. "Some farmer friend of yours sending you a consignment of apples?"

"You've got me. A man by the name of John Owens shipped it to me, charges paid, but I don't know the man from Adam. Never heard of him before. However, there doesn't seem to be any doubt, but that the box is intended for me, whoever the sender is."

"Open it up and see what's inside of it," said the broker. "Probably you will find a letter throwing some light on the matter."

Bob got a small hammer and screw-driver from a drawer in his desk and proceeded to open the box, Edna, Dick and the broker standing around, just as curious as Bob to know what was inside the box.

"Hold on," said Dick, with a grin, "lets all guess what's in it, and see who comes the nearest to it."

"That isn't a bad idea. What a brilliant intellect you have, Dick. Since you have proposed the matter, it's up to you to guess first," replied Bob.

Dick scratched his head dubiously and looked as if he was sorry he had suggested the guessing contest.

"Well, we're waiting to hear from you," said Bob.

"Where did it come from?" asked Dick.

"What difference does that make?"

"It makes a whole lot of difference. If it came from the country I should guess that it contains fruit, or something of that sort; but if——"

"I forgot to ask the expressman where it was shipped from, so you'll have to guess without any pointer to help you."

"Do you know any farmer?"

"Yes, I know several from the neighborhood where I came from, but none by the name of Owens."

"Then I guess it contains fruit," said Dick.

"What do you say, Edna?"

"I am a poor guesser."

"That doesn't excuse you. What do you think is in it?"

"A package of stock somebody has sent you to sell for them."

"Now it's your turn, Mr. Strong," said Bob, looking at the broker.

"I'll guess that it's some fake. That there is nothing in it but waste paper."

"If you should happen to be right, I don't see how the joke can be on me, for the sender has prepaid the charges. If it had been sent charges collect, I might suspect something of that kind. Now I guess that it contains some fine bananas sent to me from New Orleans."

"Gee!" ejaculated Dick, remembering about the banana corporation in which Bob held such a big block of stock. "I'll bet you're right. John Owens may be a man connected with the Eldorado company."

The guesses being all in the opening of the box proceeded. Hardly had Bob wrenched the cover off the box when a sound like the ticking of a clock reached the ears of the four.

"Creation!" cried Bob. "This may be an infernal machine."

Edna screamed. The others started back aghast.

CHAPTER XIV.—What Came Out of the Express Box.

Tick-tick-tick-tick! came from under a bed of sawdust, and every tick carried a thrill of consternation to the heart of the four persons in the room. Bob's first impulse was to seize the box and cast it through the open window into the street; but he hesitated when he thought of the crowded condition of Wall Street at that hour.

"Get out of the room, all of you," he cried. "No use of you people taking chances."

Dick and the Broker made a break for the door, threw it open and rushed into the corridor. Edna got half way, and seeing Bob was pulling the sawdust from the box, rushed back to him.

"Come, Bob, please come. Don't risk your life. Let the office go," she cried, with feverish earnestness.

"No," said Bob. "Maybe I can put this thing out of commission."

"Oh, Bob, please come, for my sake. Do come," and she seized him by the arm and tried to drag him to the door.

Bob looked at her.

"Why for your sake? Do you care so much for me?"

"Yes, yes; I care more for you than you think. Oh, do come. I couldn't bear to have you hurt. I—I—oh, Bob, Bob, do come."

Bob's fingers had closed on something that felt like a clock. With his other hand he had nervily felt all around the article, but could feel nothing but sawdust. With a quick wrench he lifted out—a small, old-fashioned clock.

The moment his eyes rested on it he recognized it as a clock which was his own property. It was the clock which had stood in one of the rooms of the old farmhouse where he was born, and which he had noted the moment when he was ushered into this life. He had written for

it a year since, and as it failed to come to hand, he had forgotten all about it.

It had now come on, and the person in whose care it had been for several years had evidently got a man by the name of John Owens to express it at the office, and the man had given the company his own name as the sender. The matter was as clear as sunlight to Bob, and he burst into a nervous kind of laugh, for, though he had seemed to make light of the apparent danger he courted, every nerve in his body had been strung to its highest tension. Suddenly dropping the clock, he grabbed Edna in his arms and kissed her two or three times.

"So you really do care for me," he exclaimed to the blushing girl, struggling to release herself from his grasp. "You do care for me. And I care for you more than anybody in this world. There is no danger in that box. It was no infernal machine at all. It only contained the clock—an old faithful time-piece that belonged to my mother, and which I had sent for to the old home, now in the possession of strangers, months ago. I shall always love that old clock, for it betrayed you into admitting that you care for me. There, now, forgive me for taking advantage of your admission; but I couldn't help it, since I love you with all my heart."

"Bob!"

"And you love me don't you dear?"

"Yes," she cried with a crimson face, breaking away from him and rushing out at the door.

Evidently Edna told Dick and the broker, whom she met at the far end of the corridor, that the box was merely an innocent box after all, for they presently appeared at the door and looked dubiously into the office.

"Hello, Bob, was that a false alarm?" asked Dick.

"That's what it was. Come in."

Dick and the broker then re-entered the room and Bob showed them the old clock and made an explanation that cleared up the matter. Of course, it all looked very funny to them now, but nevertheless, they didn't forget the shock of those few strenuous minutes when they feared that the box might explode at any moment. When Edna entered the office the next morning she wore a very demure look on her face. She hardly glanced at Bob as she took her seat.

"Good morning, Edna," he said.

"Good morning, Bob," she replied.

The young speculator jumped up and went over to her.

"Are you glad that things happened as they did yesterday afternoon?" he said, putting his arms around her.

She was silent for a moment, then she looked at him and said, "Yes" in a low tone.

What more Bob might have said was cut short by a knock at the door, which opened and admitted Mr. Blum's clerk. He brought the deposit of \$500 on the 10,000 shares of Eldorado Banana Corporation stock.

"All right," said Bob, writing out a receipt for the money. "I'll attend to the matter at once. It may be a week before the new certificates are returned to me, but as soon as they are I will call at Mr. Blum's office with the one made out in his client's name."

A few days afterward another item appeared

in a Wall Street journal about the Sunrise mine. It stated that work was progressing at a satisfactory rate along a new cross tunnel, and it was confidently expected that a strike would be made shortly. The market report from Goldfield showed that Sunrise was ruling at seven cents a share.

When he went out he asked one of the best known Curb brokers if there was any demand at all for Sunrise stock.

"Well, 51-2 cents was offered for it yesterday afternoon, but six cents was asked. Sales have been made on the Goldfield Exchange at seven," was the reply.

Bob made no more inquiries about the stock, as he didn't intend to sell his 10,000 shares anyway. At the end of a week he got the new certificates of the banana company from the secretary at New Orleans. He carried the 10,000 share certificate made out in Mr. Blum's client's name to the Grand Street office and delivered it to the manager of the mining bureau, together with the \$500 deposit, receiving the certified check for \$5,000 in return.

That afternoon Bob bought 1,500 shares of B. & O. at 116. He had received a pointer from Broker Strong that the stock would advance in price in a few days owing to the fact that a favorable decision was expected in a certain suit brought against the company by the Railroad commission. Two days later B. & O. was up to 118. On the strength of that Bob bought another 1,000 shares.

A week later the decision was rendered and it proved to be in the company's favor. Immediately B. & O. jumped to 125. Bob lost no time in selling out at that figure and realized a profit of \$19,750, which raised his cash capital to \$46,000. Figuring his banana corporation as worth 50 cents a share, and his Sunrise mining at \$1,000 without taking into consideration the possible worth of his other securities, he told Edna that he was worth over \$60,000.

"My good fortune is practically all due to the fact that Mr. Hopkins made me his heir," he said to the stenographer. "I wouldn't have had enough money of my own to have made anything like the showing I have achieved, but with the help of a part of the securities he left me, I was able to take advantage of my opportunities and win out."

CHAPTER XV.—Conclusion.

Bob carried on his speculative operations with varying success from that point up to the first of May. He had to depend wholly on his own judgement, like the average trader, and the result was some of his deals did not pan out the way he expected, and consequently he suffered financial losses once in a while. His caution prevented him from getting badly bitten at any time, so that on the whole he found himself on Mayday still worth in cash \$50,000.

During those seven months since he made his start he had but the single customer who had bought his Excelsior Copper shares. The stock had gone up nearly fifty percent. higher than he sold it for, but after a time it dropped down again and was not much sought after. Bob renewed his arrangement with Mr. Rider for the small room, but he had to pay the full rent this

time for the ensuing year, though Mr. Rider did not ask him to pay more than a month at a time.

Soon after taking his new lease of the office, Bob discovered that a syndicate of millionaire operators had been formed to try and secure control of the Royal Blue Transit Line of New Jersey. Brokers employed by the syndicate were busy buying up the stock of the road wherever they could find it. The cause of this move was said to be the action of the president of the Blue Line in advocating and carrying through a certain dividend which the minority members of the board of directors, representing many thousand shares of stock, objected to.

The 30th of May is a holiday as every one knows, and Bob celebrated it by going down to Barnegat with Dick on a jaunt. While wandering about that locality they came upon a lone house occupied by a little old man who had the reputation of being a wealthy miser. The old man was working in his small vegetable patch when they came along, and no one would have judged that he was worth anything to speak of from his personal appearance, which was decidedly rusty. An old half-dead cherry tree overhung the vegetable patch, and it was making strenuous exertions to put forth a few leaves as if it hated to give up the ghost for good and all.

The old man was working directly underneath it, quite unmindful of the fact that it was rotten at the core and in danger of falling at most any time. In the field where the roots of the tree stood, was a vicious red bull belonging to the miser. The miser had a dog between whom and the bull there was no love lost. While the boys were watching the old man at his work, the dog entered the pasture and began to get gay with the bull. The bull turned and chased him, and feeling unusually frisky this morning, he caught the dog under his horns and flung him through the air like a stone from a catapult. The dog landed against the old cherry tree like a round shot from a cannon. The impact was more than the tree could stand and over it went, falling on the miser and pinning him to the ground.

"Gee!" cried Dick, aghast at the accident.

"Come on, Dick, we must extricate the old fellow from his predicament," said Bob, springing into the vegetable patch, followed by his companion. After much trouble they got the trunk of the tree off the old man, but they could see that he was badly hurt. They carried him to his house and while Dick watched him, Bob went to the village for a doctor. The physician shook his head and told the miser he was all in and he'd better think of the hereafter. He left some medicine and then took his departure. Bob and Dick tended the old miser all the afternoon, and about sundown he died. An hour before his death, when he was satisfied his end was approaching, he beckoned both boys to him.

"You've been good to me, my lads. I should have died like a dog out under the tree but for you. You are the only ones who have done me a kind action in years, and I am going to reward you for it. My own flesh and blood have deserted me, and like carrion crows, are awaiting my death to get my property. Well," he said, grimly, "they can have the old farm, but the most valuable part of my property they never shall touch. Go," nodding to Bob, "lift the stone before the hearth

and bring me the box you will find there."

Bob did so. The dying man opened it and took out two bundles done up in paper.

"This one I give you," to Bob, "and this one I give you," to Dick. "They contain railroad stock and will make a fortune for each of you."

Soon afterward Bob and Dick took a train back for the city, after Bob had arranged with an undertaker to give the miser a first-class funeral and to send the bill to him. On examining their legacies Bob found that his bundle contained 2,000 shares of Royal Blue Line stock, while Dick's contained 1,000 shares of B. & O. stock. At their market value both were worth about the same amount, of \$120,000. Dick nearly had a fit when he realized that he had suddenly become wealthy. Bob took his good fortune much more coolly. Two weeks later the annual meeting of the Blue Line came off and the syndicate failed to get control. When the news of the result of the election got out, Royal Blue Line jumped up five points, and a week later it went to 70, its nominal value.

That made Bob's 2,000 shares worth \$140,000, and made him worth all told nearly \$200,000. A few months later Bob received a dividend of ten cents a share on his stock of the banana corporation, which now had an estimated value of 65 cents a share, with every prospect of going to a dollar. About this time Bob and Dick went into partnership as brokers and speculators in a suite of two rooms on the floor above in the same building where Bob had made his start in business, and by extensive advertising they soon began to accumulate a bunch of customers, most of whom at first were out-of-town people who had been attracted by the young firm's advt.

It wasn't long before Bob had an opportunity to sell his banana stock at its par value of \$1 a share, but he declined to part with it. The Phoenix Optical Co. also came to the front, and Bob could have got \$10,000 for his 5,000 shares, but wouldn't sell them. A year from that time he married Edna, and as a wedding present gave her both the Eldorado Banana Corporation shares and the Phoenix Optical Co. shares, the combined market value of both being then \$50,000. With our young speculator's marriage we may consider that he ceased to be a boy, for he was old enough to cast his first vote. He was considered the richest young broker for his age in Wall Street, which fact, as he told Dick and his wife, was wholly brought about through his having become the old brokers' heir.

Next week's issue will contain "FROM FARM TO FORTUNE; or, THE BOY WHO MADE MONEY IN LAND."

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or

The Boy Firemen of Fairdale

By Gaston Garne

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XI.

Against False Evidence.

"But this villain Clifford I know to be an incendiary," cried Will. "I can swear that I saw him in the storehouse of Mr. Wilkins. If he can be arrested for that——"

"Were you not the only witness?"

"Yes."

"Did not Wilkins or the others see him?"

"No. He and his companions wore masks at that time."

"Then it is of no use," said Wade, with a shrug of his shoulders. "His word would be as good as yours in court. Never mind, my boy! Dugdale is not winner yet, though I must say that he has certainly got the best chance. But I have written my agents at Red Creek to do all in their power to disprove Clifford's claim. If this can be done, and I can turn him down, I'll attend to Mr. Dugdale later. In any case, it is war to the end. I have other prospects, even if I am beaten this time, and I'll camp on this villain's trail till I wind up his career if I have to take a lifetime to do it."

Will Norton could not but admire the cool nerve and self-possession of Wade, who was facing financial ruin. But he saw that the Westerner's confidence was not shared by his wife and Nellie.

Mrs. Wade's face showed anxiety, and Nellie was deeply troubled. Will was deeply stirred as he saw this.

He took his leave a little later and went home. Mrs. Norton listened to Will's account of the affair, and her face grew pale with apprehension.

"August Dugdale is a deep schemer," she said. "He has power and resource. He is scheming and unscrupulous. I am afraid it will be hard for us to remain in Fairdale if he wins the case, Will."

"Well," said the young fireman, resolutely, "the world is wide. I certainly will not care to remain in Fairdale if Dugdale and his son are to rule the place."

"Our Father will provide," said Mrs. Norton, with simple faith.

Affairs progressed slowly. Several weeks slipped by without special incident. The day for the trial, which was to decide whether Wesley Wade or Daniel Clifford really owned the Red Creek Mine, was at hand.

Clifford was never seen in Fairdale. The Dugdales kept in the background. Everybody was deeply interested in the outcome of the affair.

It might be said that sympathy was almost

wholly with Wade. Everybody liked the bluff Westerner and his family.

Work had been stopped on the palatial mansion on the hill. This caused Dugdale to chuckle and remark:

"Pride sometimes has a fall. Perhaps Wade will sell that house for a song yet."

But Wade, quiet and as genial as ever, was hard at work. He had the ablest of detectives scouring the West for evidence to support his own claim and offset that of Dan Clifford.

Monarch No. 4 had been called out to but few fires, and these were all slight blazes and easily extinguished.

Mrs. Wade and Nellie were frequent visitors at the Norton cottage. The most sincere of friendships had sprung up between Mrs. Norton and Mrs. Wade.

Nellie and Will thus met frequently, and each became conscious of a shy admiration for the other. In Will's eyes Nellie Wade was a feminine ideal. To her the boy fireman was an exalted type of hero. Which was fitting, and all as it should be. The story was one which is as old as the world itself.

But Will Norton was not the only youth in Fairdale who was attracted by the charms of pretty Nellie Wade. She had a score of young admirers.

One of these was Clinton Dugdale. His calculating mind had weighed her in the balance with other girls whom he knew, and he had become possessed of a resolve to make her his own.

While Clinton was, in the ordinary sense, too young to think of marrying, yet he felt an engagement would be quite proper, and when the proper time came he could claim Nellie Wade as his wife.

His methods of wooing, however, were hardly of the chivalrous order.

He did not venture to approach the fair object of his passions, for he had not even a speaking acquaintance with her. He was sufficiently astute to realize that any overtures on his part would be in bad taste at present.

He would wait until the present financial fight was settled. When the battle was over, then he would be in a better position to present his suit.

"She will be only too glad to marry me then," he reflected. "Indeed, I shall be to a certain extent stooping to marry the daughter of a poor man, but then she is quite the prettiest girl in Fairdale, and I can bring her up to our standard, I think."

Such was the refreshing egotism of this young scion of a wealthy parent. His whole spirit was steeped in arrogance and utter selfishness.

It irritated him to see Will Norton in attendance upon Nellie Wade.

At the fireman's ball Will was her escort. On the dance floor they were the synosure of all eyes. At many social affairs they were seen together.

"Humph!" muttered Dugdale, contemptuously. "He will find that his cake will be dough by and by. Wade will be only too glad to favor my offer for his daughter's hand. I'll make dad let up a little on his rope and give Wade a chance. That'll do the trick."

Thus the weeks passed until the day of the trial came. All Fairdale was deeply interested in the result.

The courtroom was crowded when the case was called. Dan Clifford and a dozen of his Western pals were present, and told an apparently straightforward story.

"Dave Collins first located the claim and got the papers," declared Clifford. "He then sold it to me."

"Was your deed recorded?" asked the lawyer for Wade.

"Yes, it was," replied Clifford, "but it was burned with all the rest of the records."

"What evidence have you to offer that you really owned this mine? That you bought it from Collins?"

"Two men that witnessed the papers," said Clifford. "Two others that worked claims near by an' knew that I owned it."

These men swore that this was true.

"I went away to the Klondike," declared Clifford. "While I was gone this man, Jim Preston, sold the claim to Wade. He had no right to do it, and he couldn't give no clear title. The gold mine belongs to me, and I think I've proved it."

When the defense was called it became evident at once that Mr. Wade had a weak case.

"The man Preston, of whom I bought the mine, assured me that he owned it," he said. "I have been told that he is dead, so I cannot fall back upon him to prove my claim. I am certain that he was an honest man, and that he told me the truth."

Will Norton, who was among the spectators, saw that the case was lost. While there was no doubt in his mind that Clifford's claim was a fraudulent one, it could not be disproved. It seemed a stronger claim than Wade's, for it was backed by sworn witnesses.

The jury did not consider the case long. They returned after a short deliberation, and awarded a verdict in favor of Clifford.

But the case was not yet ended. An appeal was filed to a higher court. Wade was calm and self-possessed. As they were leaving the courtroom Will joined him.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Wade," he began.

"Pshaw! Don't give it a thought," said the plucky Westerner. "The battle is not lost yet by any means. That gang Clifford brought here have lied, and they will be found out. I am going to fight just as long as I have a bit of resource left. Something may turn our way yet."

Will Norton could not help but admire the grit and self-reliance of this man of nerve, and wish him all success.

Just then, as they were passing out of the courtroom door, they saw Dugdale. He was standing in their path. The face of the Fairdale millionaire reflected evil exultation and triumph.

"Ah, Mr. Wesley Wade," he said, "when are you going to carry out that threat of yours to break me financially? Perhaps after you have stolen another gold mine you can continue to make threats."

Wade did not appear to notice Dugdale at all. He looked over his head and said to Will in an offhand manner:

"Do you hear that coyote barking, Will? They are great animals to bark and show their teeth, but when you get after them they put their tails between their legs and cut for their lives. Nobody fears them."

The cool and cutting allusion stung Dugdale

like the lash of a whip. Perhaps he was conscious of his own mental and physical inferiority to the speaker. However this was, he lost control of himself and hissed, loudly:

"This is only the beginning, Wesley Wade! So much for that! When I am done with you, you will wish you had never crossed my path. I will see you groveling in prison and your proud wife and daughter begging for bread. Do your duty, officer!"

A constable stepped forward and placed a hand on Mr. Wade's arm.

"You are my prisoner," he said.

CHAPTER XII.

Will Hits Upon a Dark Plot.

This development was like a thunderclap to Wade as well as to Will Norton. For a moment the Westerner stared at the officer.

"You arrest me?" he demanded.

"I do, sir."

"On what charge?"

"The charge of theft and fraud. Here is the warrant, sir. It was sworn out by Daniel Clifford."

"Why, this is absurd," said Wade. "You can't arrest me for that. The case was a civil case, and there is no criminal aspect to it. This is preposterous!"

"I don't know about that, sir. The warrant has been issued, and I must serve it."

"Certainly," agreed Wade, readily. "Will, just go down to the hotel and tell Mrs. Wade I want her to bring some money to the jail to bail me out."

"You will find that will be a difficult thing to obtain," sneered Dugdale. "The judge is well posted, and he don't intend to give you the chance to skip to Europe or some other part of the world."

"You contemptible scoundrel!" cried Wade, hotly, "this is your work!"

"Give me credit for anything you please," said Dugdale, with a chuckle. "Oh, this is only the beginning."

"It is infamous!" cried Will, angrily. "Mr. Wade has done nothing that he should be arrested for. August Dugdale, I am a young man and poor, but I warn you that I will devote my life to unmasking you and your villainies. I know that this fellow Dave Clifford, whom you are backing, is a desperado and an incendiary—"

"Stop, Will!" cried Wade, sharply. "Say nothing. Leave everything to me. I am not afraid to go to prison on this charge. It cannot be proved against me. There will be a turn in affairs tremble, August Dugdale! It will go hard with very soon, and when that turn does come—you."

Dugdale only glared at his foe and turned away. Will went with Wade as far as the police station. Then he hastened to carry the news to Mrs. Wade and Nellie.

It was a hard task for Will. Mrs. Wade grew faint and ill, and it was some time before she recovered.

(To be continued.)

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

BARBER USES VIOLIN

A Brixton barber in England has hit upon the novel idea of entertaining his patrons, and more especially his patronesses, with violin solos while their hair is being dressed.

The process of bobbing or shingling is a lengthy and tedious one for the woman in the chair, and barbers are sometimes at their wits' end to know how to keep up an interesting flow of chatter.

LEGLESS VENDOR LIVES IN HOTEL

When Roller Skate Pete was reluctant to shake the dust of Lancaster, Pa., police started an investigation. They found Pete had come to town in a large automobile and that he had quartered his wife in a downtown hotel before starting to sell pencils on the streets.

The man obtained his nickname from the fact that he travels about on roller skates attached to the stubs of what were his legs. Police say the man's wife was fashionably dressed and appeared well supplied with money.

DEVOID OF BEAUTY SHOPS

A village of Samsons and Delilahs, in a broadly figurative way, is Arlington, Ill., a community of 700 population, for the town boasts no barber. Main street is as devoid of beauty shops as it is of barber poles, and haircutting is reduced to a manual art of self-imposition unless the flappers and the sheiks want to go someplace else.

Even an itinerant barber, like the old-fashioned umbrella mender, would find hospitality in Arlington, thinks James Farmer, a barber of La Salle.

ECLIPSES OF SUN AND MOON OCCURRING IN 1927

Three eclipses of the sun and two eclipses of the moon are listed in the calendar for 1927. The first of these occurred on Jan. 3 and was called the annular eclipse of the sun.

The second eclipse will be that of the moon. It will occur on June 15 and the totality belt will be

visible in parts of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, on the continents of North and South America and in Australia.

An eclipse of the sun that will attract great attention will take place on June 29. The line of totality will pass from the Atlantic across the Irish Sea, North Wales, England from the Dee to the Tees, the North Sea, part of Scandinavia, the Arctic, northeast of Siberia, Bering Sea and the Aleutian Islands.

The second total eclipse of the moon is due on Dec. 8 and its totality belt will be visible in the Pacific Ocean, Australia, the Indian Ocean, Asia, Africa, eastern part of Europe and the northern part of North America.

The last eclipse of the year will be a partial eclipse of the sun on Dec. 24. This will be visible only in the Southern Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean and in the Anarctic regions.

LAUGHS

HISTORICAL RESEARCH

"Things have come to a pretty pass," said Leonidas at Thermopylae.—Yale Record.

WANT AD

Wanted—Sorority girl with wooden leg to stir home brew.—N. Y. Medley.

AN I. O. U.

An I. O. U. is another one of those paper waits.—M. I. T. Voo Doo.

THREE TIMES AND OUT

"I can't marry that woman."

"Why not?"

"I've divorced her three times now."—Cornell Widow.

NOT THAT

"Are you a student?"

"No; I just go to college here."—Lafayette Lyre.

AFTER EFFECTS

"Hello!"

"I beg your pardon! You've made a mistake.

"Aren't you the little girl I kissed at the party last night?"

"Must have been sister. She's sick."—Princeton Tiger.

ROUND NUMBERS

"I killed forty-nine birds yesterday."

"Why didn't you kill one more and make it a round fifty?"

"Well, forty-nine is around fifty, isn't it?"

—Vanderbilt Masquerader.

WRONG NUMBER

Visitor: Can you tell me if Bill Jones is up in his room?

Frosh: Sorry, there's nobody home on the top floor!

Visitor: Oh, excuse me. I'll ask someone else.

—Columbia Jester.

CURRENT NEWS

1913 FLIVVER STILL RUNNING

C. Pearl, curator of the Firelands Museum, is receiving wide publicity these days because he is driving a 1913 flivver with oil lights fore and aft and most of the other accessories which came with the machine.

UNDERGROUND ROADS IN PARIS

Underground passages for automobiles at the principal street intersections are to be constructed this year in Paris to relieve traffic congestion. The system will be extended if the idea works.

RIVER BED UNCOVERED

Buried beneath an overtop of adobe and clay hardpan, an ancient river bed, presumably that through which the Sacramento river at one time flowed, has been discovered by County Engineer H. H. Hume.

The discovery has been called to the attention of the Geographical Department of the University of California and a study of the course of the ancient river is expected.

\$15 FOR IDENTITY CARD

All Americans going to France and all who reside there even a few months yearly may be justly confused regarding the ritual of identity cards, due to recent numerous conflicting rulings handed down by the French government, but final instructions have now been given by the Ministry of the Interior. These are intended to clear up once and for all the many "musts" and "don'ts" which have been tossed about on the perplexing subject.

In the first place, the validity of an identity card has definitely been set for one year from the date of entry into France.

Identity cards are obligatory for all foreigners whose sojourn exceeds two months.

The fee for the issue or renewal of the identity card is 375 francs, or \$15.

It is reduced to 40 francs for parents of French children, students, authors, journalists, scientists and certain salaried workers. A special privilege is extended to foreigners who served in the French army or Foreign Legion, and they receive cards free of charge.

WOMAN BANDIT

Handling a pistol with dexterity, a well dressed young woman held up two stores and a restaurant in St. Louis recently and escaped with \$134. In each instance the woman entered as a customer and covered her victims. Then a young man came in and took the cash from the registers under her directions. She wore different hats and indicated a desire for cigarettes.

At the butcher shop of Edward Grosscupp the woman asked for pork chops, drew her pistol and told him to "lie down." Then she called to her confederate, who took \$2 from Grosscupp's pocket and \$2 from the cash register.

"We'll need some pork chops, too," the woman suggested.

So her assistant lifted a heavy rack of pork, valued at \$10, and they departed in the blue automobile.

NOW THAT IT'S SPRING, WE HAD A MILD WINTER

Predictions of goose-bone prophets last fall for a severe winter were far afield in the view of the Weather Bureau, which says the winter now closing was one of the mildest of a long mild series.

The winter of 1917-18 was severe practically everywhere east of the Rocky Mountains, but since that time the winters have been unusually mild.

In all parts of the country this winter was warmer than normal except in local areas in the Northwest, the bureau says. It was especially warm in the South, and fruit trees throughout the Central and Southern States have been prematurely advanced so that they face the danger of a late frost.

PARLORS FOR DOGS

A new form of business has sprung up in London as a result of the steady increase in the number of dog lovers in the city. Dogs now have their own chiropodists, hairdressers, manicurists and barbers.

A beauty parlor recently opened in London caters exclusively to the pampered pets of society. There are toilet articles, perfumes, oils, shampoos and soaps for every kind of dog from the tiny Pekingese to mastiffs and St. Bernards. The place looks like an ordinary barber shop except that there are tables instead of chairs and dog soap is used instead of shaving soap. There the canine customer can get a trim, a shingle, a shampoo and a shave and about the same cost as his master would pay in his own shop.

Conspicuous in the shop are supplies of dog biscuits with which the dogs are packed during the process of being beautified. While his hair is being cut the animal is allowed to munch contentedly on a choice bit of biscuit. The dogs' coats are first trimmed, then shampooed and bathed. Electric driers are used to prevent resulting colds. Then, if necessary, the customer has his nails cut and teeth cleaned by a new process.

The combings from the dogs' coats are proving a valuable by-product of the shop. Two chow dogs provided by this means a vest for their master and a scarf for their mistress. An old English sheep dog furnished sufficient hair when woven to make several yards of cloth.

The shop, which was at first opened more or less as an experiment, has proved to be a howling success, the line of waiting customers growing longer and longer each day. The managers find that dog owners are willing to pay comparatively high rates to have their pets properly trimmed and washed, and, so convenient is the practice of sending the animals to a regular shop, that they have made standing weekly appointments.

TIMELY TOPICS

UP-TO-DATE ROADS

Part of the task of modernizing London's roads is being accomplished through the construction of a series of very expensive arterial highways which will finally serve to drive new ways of entry into the city.

The old lanes are not always widened in the country, but where they are not the plan is to build parallel roads wherever rights of way can be obtained.

JUMP QUICK IN BERLIN

Since the establishment of a light control system on a number of the city's principal streets in Berlin, Germany, pedestrians are learning the signal changes to green, the line of motor vehicles plunges forward apparently regardless of any pedestrian who may be on the roadway. As a result the lively jumping of foot travelers is getting to be one of the sights of the town.

NEW SAFETY SLOGANS

During a recent educational accident prevention campaign in a Massachusetts county school children submitted 1,556 safety slogans. The following were among the best offered:

"Don't try to show your speed; show your intelligence."

"Look ahead; never mind the girl."

"Drive with care; other lives amount to just as much as yours."

"Protect pedestrians; don't abolish them."

LONG HAIR ONCE MORE

Long hair for co-eds is gaining in popularity at the University of Kansas.

Beginning a few weeks ago when a few of the elite of the campus decided to be "different," the long hair movement is growing steadily. Fashion dictators on the hill predict that by Spring bobbed hair will be almost as scarce as long hair was a few weeks ago.

A check of 200 representative women of the campus shows 151 letting their hair grow.

HIGHWAY SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES

The Bureau of Public Roads of the Department of Agriculture has completed the work of mapping the United States system of highways, consisting of 80,000 miles of the most important roads in the country. The system selected embraces ten main transcontinental routes, designated by numbers which are multipliers of 10, while the important north and south routes are numbered 1, 11, 21, 31, etc. The route-numbering system which has been decided upon will be of great assistance to tourists.

BOBBED HAIR TOO EXPENSIVE

Two hundred working girls and matrons are up in arms in Tannrode, Thuringia, over an attempt to introduce the bobbed head forcibly. At the electric works a bulletin unexpectedly appeared that the women must have their hair bobbed or run the risk of being fired.

The women pointed out that they are earning but 4 to 5 cents an hour, which means a weekly wage of about \$2. They figure the cost of maintaining the bob at 37 cents a week, or almost 20 per cent. of their wages.

MORE PAY FOR WAITERS

Waiters in Berlin are demanding more pay.

The union has presented demands for 15 per cent. tips instead of the prevailing 10 per cent., which is automatically added on to the bill in all restaurants and coffee houses.

The additional burden, it is proposed, shall be borne by proprietors. The waiters also want an eight-hour day instead of the prevailing 8 1-2 hours, and 15 per cent. increase in wages for overtime.

PROTECT CITY'S BUILDINGS

Builders who in the middle ages planned and erected the wonderful buildings that ornament the old German cities were remarkable craftsmen, but they could not foresee the traffic of the twentieth century.

And so the city fathers of Rothenburg-on-the-Tauber in Nuremburg now face the problem of how to protect the city's historic buildings from damage from automobile traffic in the narrow streets.

SIXTY SECONDS IN A MINUTE

How many seconds make a minute? Everybody knows the answer—sixty. But why? We can blame it on the Babylonians. In the system of notation two stood out—the decimal, which counted by tens, and the sexagesimal, which counted by sixties. The choice of sixty as a unit of notation was no accident, either. There is no other number which has so many divisors as sixty. It may be divided by one, two, three, four, five, six and ten.

The Babylonians divided the sun's daily journey into twenty-four periods. Each period or hour was subdivided into sixty minutes, and each minute into sixty seconds. The whole course of the sun during the twenty-four parasangs, or 720 stadia, or 360 degrees. The system was handed on to the Greek, and thus it was carried down the middle ages. When the French revolutionized the system of weights, measures, coins and dates, during the revolution, they refrained from interfering with the sexagesimal system of time. Gradually, for purposes of standardization, the system originating in Babylon spread all over the world—wherever the sun rose and set an hour was sixty minutes, a minute was sixty seconds.

When the Babylonians were working on the standardization of time in their empire, their astronomers compared the apparent progress made by the sun during one hour at the time of the equinox to the progress made by a good walker during the same time. Both accomplished a parasang, or 3.88 miles, in the same time.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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